# THE TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE OF THE UNSEEN CHRIST,

OR

A DISCOURSE, chiefly tending to excite and promote the decaying Love of Christ in the hearts of Christians.

With an *APPENDIX*, concerning Christs Manifestation of himself to them that love him.

1 *Cor.* 16. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.*

By

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[illegible] Lord Jesus Christ, [illegible]

[illegible]

THOMAS VINCENT,

[illegible]

# To the Reader.

OUr Saviour ſent an Epiſtle from heaven to the Church of Epheſus, wherein he reproveth her becauſe ſhe had left her firſt love, and threatneth the Removal of her Candleſtick, that he would take away her light, if ſhe did not recover her Love. By the ſame hand at the ſame time he ſent another Epiſtle to the Church of Laodicea, wherein he reproveth her lukewarmneſs, and threatneth, becauſe ſhe was neither hot nor cold, he would ſpue her out of his mouth. Rev. 2. 4, 5. & 3. 15, 16. And are Chriſtians in England under no ſuch ſin, in no ſuch danger? when ſome ſcoff at the flames of love to Chriſt, like dogs that bark at the Moon ſo far above them; when the moſt nominal Chriſtians are wholly ſtrangers to this Love, whatever their national knowledge be; the former looking upon it as but a fancy, the latter having it only in the Theory: and when amongſt thoſe Chriſtians who love Chriſt in ſincerity, there are ſo few that know what it is to love Chriſt with fervour and ardency: when there is ſo General a decay of Love to Chriſt in the Land, Lord what is like to become of England? Have we not provoked the Lord to take away our Candleſtick, to ſuffer the worſe than Egyptian darkneſs to overſpread us again, & cover our Light becauſe it ſhineth with ſuch cold beams, becauſe the light of knowledge in the head is accompanied with ſo little warmth of Love to Chriſt in the hearts of moſt Chriſtians? Every one will fetch water to quench fire in a general conflagration; and ſurely there is need in a day of ſuch general decay of Love to Chriſt, that ſome ſhould fetch fire, fire from heaven, & uſe bellows too, Arguments I mean, to enkindle and blow up the

*spark of Love to Christ, which seems so ready to expire, Reader, the following discourse concerning the true Christians Love of the unseen Christ, is not finely spun, and curiously woven with neatnesses of wit and language; it is not flourished and set off with variety of Metaphors, Hyperbolies, Rhetorical Elegancies, or Poetical Fancies and fragments; it is not adorned and fringed with the specious show of many Marginal Quotations, excerpted out of divers Authors; The discourse is plain, but the Author hath endeavoured that it might be warm, his design being more to advance his Master than himself in thy esteem: and if he have less of thy praise, so his Lord may have more of thy love, his great end is attained. The chief part of this discourse concerning the love of Christ is application, and about two thirds of it Exhortation (there being generally in this knowing age more need of excitation than information) where thou hast variety of arguments and motives to stir up and provoke unto the love of Christ, together with divers directions how to attain this love in the truth and strength of it, and wherein the strength of love to Christ should evidence it self. There is also an appendix added for further encouragement unto the love of Christ, concerning Christs manifestation of himself unto such as love him. The whole discourse is practical, nothing in it controversal; not only Protestants, but Papists too will verbally acknowledge the obligation which Christians have to love Christ, and none will oppose this that are true Christians, none but Turks, Infidels and Devils are professedly against it. That this little Book may be blessed by the Lord to be a means to warm and inflame thine heart with love to the unseen Christ, is the earnest prayer of*

*A hearty well-wisher to thy soul*

THOMAS VINCENT.

# THE TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE of The UNSEEN CHRIST.

1 Pet. 1. 8.

*WHom having not Seen, ye Love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet Believing, ye Rejoyce with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.*

THE Life of Christianity doth consist very much in our love unto Christ. Without Love unto Christ, we are as much without Spiritual Life, as a Carkass when the Soul is fled from it, is without Natural Life. Faith without Love to Christ, is a dead Faith; and a Christian without Love to Christ, is a dead Christian; dead in Sins and Trespasses. Without Love to Christ, we may have the Name of Christians, but we are wholly without the Nature: we may have the Form of Godliness, but are wholly without the Power. *Give me thine Heart*, is the language of God to all the Children of Men, *Prov.* 23. 26. And *Give me thy Love*, is the language of Christ unto all his Disciples.

Christ knoweth the command and influence which Love to him, in the Truth and Strength of it, hath: How it will engage all the other Affections of his Disciples

ciples for Him; that if he have their Love, their Desires will be chiefly after Him: their Delights will be chiefly in him, their Hopes and Expectations will be chiefly from Him, their Hatred, Fear, Grief, Anger, will be carried forth chiefly unto Sin, as it is offensive unto Him. He knows that Love will engage and employ, for him all the Powers and Faculties of their Souls; their Thoughts will be brought into Captivity and Obedience unto Him: their Understandings will be employed in seeking and finding out his Truths; their Memories will be Receptacles to retain them: their Conscience will be ready to accuse and excuse as his faithfull Deputies: their Wills will choose and refuse according to his Direction and revealed pleasure. All their Senses and the Members of their Bodies, will be his Servants: their eyes will see for him, their ears will hear for him, their tongues will speak for him, their hands will work for him, their feet will walk for him: All their gifts and talents will be at his devotion and service. If he have their Love, they will be ready to do for him what he requireth; they will be ready to suffer for him, whatever he calleth them unto: If they have much Love to him, they will not think much of denying themselves, taking up his cross and following him wherever he leadeth them, love to Christ then being so essential unto true Christianity, so earnestly looked for by our Lord and Master, so powerfully commauding in the soul and over the whole Man, so greatly influential on duty; I have made choice of this subject of *Love to Christ*, to treat on: and my chief endeavor herein shall be to excite and provoke Christians unto the lively & vigorous exercise of this Grace of Love unto the Lord Jesus Christ; of which incentives, there is a great and universal need,

The Epistle wherein my Text lyeth; was written by *Peter* the Apostle of the Circumcision, and is directed to the Strangers scattered throughout *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia* and *Bithynia*, as in the first *vers.* of this Chapter. By these Strangers we are to understand the scattered *Jews*, who were Strangers in these several countries where they did inhabit. We read in the 2d of the *Acts* that there came up many of these *Jews*, from these and other countries, unto *Jerusalem* to Worship, and in the temple hearing the Apostles speak with divers tongues, which were of use in the divers places where they did live, and that without instruction from Man, but as the Spirit gave them utterance: they were amazed and confounded: and afterward hearing *Peter* preach, through the wonderful power of the Spirit, three thousand of them were converted by one Sermon unto the Christian Faith, and added to the Christian Church. When the Feast of Pentecost was over, these converted *Jews* returned into their countries where their several dwellings, Families and callings were: which countries being heathenish and idolatrous, no doubt but there they met with Opposition and sufferiug upon the account of the Christian Religion, which they became zealous Professors of, besides what they endured from their own countreymen, or unconverted *Jews* who hated Christianity more than the heathens did. The Apostle doth seem to have a respect unto these in this Epistle, wherein he doth encourage them under their sufferings for the sake of Christ by many consolatory Arguments. In the 2d *vers.* he wished that Grace and Peace might be multiplyed in them and towards them, and then though their sufferings did abound, their consolations would abound much more. In the 3d 4th and 5th *vers.*

He blesseth God for his abundant Mercy towards them in begetting them unto a lively Hope of the glorious and never fading heavenly inheritance which was reserved for them through Gods infinite Grace, and unto which they were reserved and kept through Faith by Gods infinite power. In the 6th and 7th *verses*, he telleth them, however they were in heavines through manifold Temptations, that is Afflictions, which are the Worlds left hand Temptations; yet he giveth them to understand that these afflictions they were but for a season; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning; they were but needful to humble them, to purifie them, to crucifie them to the world, to make them conformable to their head the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they were for the tryal of their faith, that the truth of it might appear both to themselves and others, and that the worth of it might appear how much more precious than Gold when it is tryed in the Fire, which carrying them thorow their sufferings, might be found both to their own praise and their Masters honour, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: and then the Apostle doth take occasion in the text to speak of their Love which they did bear unto this Jesus Christ, and of that unspeakable and glorious joy, which doth result from believing in him although they had no sight of him, which no trouble or affliction could overwhelm or hinder. *Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of Glory.*

Hence observe:

Doct. 1. *That it is the Property and duty of true Christians to Love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen; Whom having not seen ye Love.*

Doct. 2. *That true Christians do Believe in an unseen Christ.*

*In whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing.*

Doct. 3. *That true Christians do or may rejoyce in Believing with unspeakable and glorious joy. In whom, though now ye see him not, yet Believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory.*

Here are three great points to be treated of. 1. Concerning the Love of Christians unto Christ, 2. Concerning the faith of Christians in Christ, 3. Concerning the Joy of Christians in Believing. For the present I shall speak only of the Love of Christians unto Christ under the first Doctrine, the other two I may have opportunity to treat of afterwards.

## SECTION I.

Doct. *That it is the Property and duty of true Christians to love the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen.*

In handling of this point I shall speak. 1. Concerning true Christians who do love Jesus Christ. 2. Concerning Jesus Christ whom they have never seen, the Object of their Love. 3. Concerning the Love which they bare unto this unseen Christ. 4 Shew that it is the Property of true Christians to Love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen. 5. That it is their Duty to love him. 6. How they ought to love Him. 7. Why they do love him, where I shall give the reasons of the point. 8. Make some Use and Application.

1. Concerning true Christians whose property it is to love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen, *whom having not seen yee love, ye love*, that is, ye who are true Christians, who are so in reality as well as profession, and of these true Christians that do love Christ, the Apostle doth give a description in the 2d. *ver.* where he

calls them, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* True Christians are Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, they are such whom God according to the Councel of his own will, according to his own purpose and grace, did choose from all eternity to be a holy and peculiar people to himself, to glorifie him here on Earth, and that they might be glorifyed by him hereafter in heaven. And this election doth evidence it self in the sanctification of the Spirit, true Christians are sanctified being separated and set apart from the rest of the world, for Gods use and service: God hath sealed them for himself, and hereby distinguished them from all others, the Motto of which seal is this, *Holiness unto the Lord.* See a description of them in this respect, 2 Tim. 2. 21. *If any man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto Honour, sanctifyed and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work:* they are purged from the defilement of sin, which doth pollute and dishonor them, they are vessels unto honour, like those of Silver and Gold in a great house, which are adorned with pearls and precious stones; they are adorned with all sanctifying graces, which are of more worth than the richest Jewels; and hereby they are both beautiful in Gods eye, and they are made meet for Gods use, being hereby prepared and enabled unto every good work. This the Apostle prays for in the behalf of the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thess.* 5. 23 *And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* True Christians are sanctifyed wholly, in their whole man, though they be not sanctified thorowly: they are sanctified in every part, though

though they be not sanctified in the highest degree. Their whole Spirit is sanctified that is the higher faculties of the soul, namely the understanding and the will: their understandings are enlightned by the Spirit unto a spiritual discerning both of good and evil, beyond what any natural man doth or can attain unto: their wills are bowed, or rather rectified, and made straight, being enclined unto God and his Law. Their Souls are sanctified in the inferiour faculties, in all the affections belonging both to the concupiscible and irrascible appetite; their liking affections of love, desire, delight and hope are towards God and Christ and things above: their disliking affections of hatred, fear, grief and anger are towards sin. Their bodies also are sanctifyed being made members of Christ, and instruments of Righteousness; their eyes, ears, tongues, hands, feet and every part being devoted to God and made use of for his glory; Thus true Christians are sanctified by the spirit. And they are sanctified unto obedience, the graces which are wrought by the spirit in their hearts, do appear in the obedience of their lives; the course of their lives is a course of obedience unto the laws of Christ; they are sanctified unto obedience and they are sanctified unto sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; God hath set them apart to be sprinkled with the blood of the immaculate Lamb, who takes away sin that they might be pardoned and saved, such are true Christians who love Christ whom they have not seen.

## SECTION II.

Secondly CConcerning the object of true Christians Love, and that is Jesus Christ whom they

they have never seen. This Jesus Christ whom they love is the eternal Son of God, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, who in time assumed our Humane Nature, clothed himself with our mortal Flesh, lived like a servant in a mean condition, died like a malefactor the cursed Death of the cross, and all for our sakes, for our sins, rose again the third day for our Justification, ascended up into heaven after fourty days, and there is set down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high, to make intercession for us, and to make preparation there for our reception, into the glorious Mansions and eternal Habitations, which are in the Fathers house. He is called Jesus from the Hebrew word JASCHA, which signifieth *to save* because *he saveth his people from their sins, Matth* 1. 21. He is called Christ from the Greek word χρίω which signifieth, *to anoint*, he being anointed by the Father with the Spirit and with Power, to be Mediator between God and Man, to be the great Prophet, and Priest, and King, of the Church This Jesus Christ Christians have not seen with the eye of sense; indeed some Christians in the primitive times, as the Apostles who were of his family and other disciples who conversed with him frequently, did see Christ with the eye of sense, but it was in his state of Humiliation, when he was here upon the Earth, not in his state of Exaltation, now he is in Heaven; yet some have seen Christ after his Ascension, namely *Paul* at his conversion and *Stephen* the Proto-Martyr before he died; but none have had a perfect sight with bodily eyes of the Glory which is upon Christs body, the lustre of which is so great that none can behold it in this state of weakness and imperfection, and live. But whatever sight some Christians have had formerly, no Christians now have a sight of Christs Person; they have heard of him with

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the hearing of the Ear, but they have not seen him with the seeing of the Eye; they have seen Representations of Christ in the Sacrament, but they have never seen his Person that is represented; they have seen his Image upon their Fellow-Christians, but they have not seen the original from whom this Image hath been drawn. Some Christians have been in *Judea*, and seen the place where the Lord lived; and at *Jerusalem* and seen the place where the Lord dyed; and visited the place of his Sepulchre where the Lord for a time did lye: and they have seen the Mount whence the Lord ascended; but no Christians now alive have been in *Jerusalem*, and on Mount *Sion*, which is above, to see where the Lord now is in his Glory. It is this Jesus Christ whom Christians have not seen, that is the Object of their Love.

## SECTION III.

Thirdly, Concerning the Love which true Christians do bear unto this unseen Christ. Love is the going forth of the heart unto the Object beloved; and the Love which true Christians do bear unto Jesus Christ, is a Grace wrought by the Spirit in their hearts, whereby upon discovery and believing Apprehensions of Christs infinite loveliness and excellency, his matchless Love, Grace and Mercy: their hearts do go forth towards him in earnest desires after union to him, and communion with him, wherein they take chief complacency: and this accompanied with a yeilding and dedication of themselves unto his will & service

1. *The Love of Christians unto Christ, is a Grace wrought in their hearts by the Spirit.* It is a flower most sweet and fragrant, but there is no seed of it in the nature of any

man

Man since the Fall, it is planted in the soul by the Spirit of God. Love to Christ is a Divine spark, that comes down from above: a fire which is kindled by the breath of the Lord, whose Essence is Love.

2. *The Ground of this Love to Christ, is the discovery and believing apprehensions of Christs lovelinesse and Love.* There must be first a discovery of Christ as a futable Object for Love, and not a bare Notion of this, but believing apprehensions of it, that Christ is infinitely lovely, superlatively excellent: and that his love is matchless and transcendent towards the Children of Men, that there is a treasury in him, and a Storehouse of all graces, and the most needfull and rich supplies: otherwise there will be no going forth of the heart in love unto him.

3. *The Actings of Christians love to Christ, is in their desires after union Unto, and Communion with Christ.* It is the Nature of love to desire Union to the Object beloved; especially of this love to Christ: and this Union being attained, the desires are after communion with Christ, converse and fellowship with him: no converse is so desirable as with the Persons whom we most dearly love: and this communion being attained, there is chief complacency therein, the Soul doth sweetly rest and repose it self in Christ, and rejoyceth in his presence and love.

4. *The Concomitant of this Love which true Christians have unto Christ, is a yielding and dedication of themselves unto his will and service.* Lovers do give themselves unto those whom they love: this accompanieth the Marriage-Union: and such as love Christ, they are espoused and joyned unto Christ: and they give themselves unto Christ to be his, and wholly at his dispose, as the Wife giveth her self unto the dispose of her Husband.

Sect.

## SECTION IV.

Fourthly, THe Fourth thing is to shew, that it is the Property of all true Christians, to love this unseen Christ. True Christians are differenced and distinguished, not only from all Heathens and Infidels, but also from all bare Nominall Christians, by their Love to Jesus Christ. It is the property of covetous Persons to love worldly Wealth and Riches: It is the Property of ambitious Persons, to love worldly honour and dignities: It is the Property of voluptuous Persons, to love sensual pleasures and delights: And it is the property of true Christians to love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen. None but such as are true Christians do love Christ, and all those that are true Christians do love him. The loveliness of Christ doth appear not to the eye of sense, but to the eye of Faith: they that do not see him with this eye, they cannot love him; and they that do see him with this eye, they cannot choose but love him. Such as do not love Christ, it is not because Christ wants beauty, but because they are blind. Now all true Christians have this eye of Faith, to discern Christs Excellencies; and none but true Christians have this eye: the essence of Christianity doth consist in believing; Reason makes us Men, but Faith makes us true Christians. It being therefore the property of true Christians to believe, it is their property also to love this Unseen Christ.

## SECTION V.

Fifthly, THe Fifth thing is to shew; that it is the Duty of all true Christians to love this unseen Christ. This will appear if you look into

John

*John* 21.15,16,17. *Peter* was one of the boldest and forwardest of all Christs disciples, but he had been withal too self-confident, which was the introduction unto and laid the foundation for his fall & thrice shameful denial of his Master: a look from his Lord put him in remembrance, and brought him to Repentance with bitter weeping for his sin so soon as it was committed. After our Saviour was risen from the dead; he appears unto *Peter* with other of his disciples and in this place he asketh the same question in the same words three times, *Simon Son of Jonas lovest thou me?* Whereby as he doth tacitly upbraid him for his great sin in his three times denyal of him (which had there not been a defect in his love, he would never have done) so he doth also give a signification that love to himself is the great duty, and the great thing which he doth look for in all his disciples

## SECTION VI.

THe 6th thing is to shew how Christians ought to love this unseen Christ.

1. Christians ought to love Christ with sincerity of Love, *Eph.*6.24. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.* It was the great sin of *Judah*, *Jer.*3.10. That *she turned not to the Lord with her whole heart, but feignedly:* so it is a great sin to love Christ with a feigned and hypocritical love: the love of Christians to Christ ought to be sincere in regard of the habit and inward workings of it, they must love him not only in show, word, and outward profession, but their love must be cordial in the heart and so a love indeed and in truth: and the love of Christians to Christ must be sincere in regard of the object of it, they must love Christ for him,

himself and not chiefly for what they get by him; to love Christ only for temporal gain is hypocritical love, to love Christ chiefly for other gain is not so spiritual, but to love Christ for his own excellencies and perfections is most sincere and generous, this sincerity of love to Christ is every ones duty.

2. Christians ought to love Christ with supremacy of love, they must place him in the highest seat of their hearts; he is a great King, and he looks for the Throne, and that all creatures should be placed beneath him, and stand at his Footstool: Matth. 10. 37. *He that loveth Father or Mother more than mee, is not worthy of me; he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of Me.* They are the words of our Saviour: Christians may love Father and Mother, the Law of God and Nature doth require it: they may love Husband and Wife, the Word of God enjoyneth the Husband to love his Wife as his own Body, and as Christ loved the Church; they may love Sons, Daughters, Brethren, Sisters, Kindred, Friends, yea Enemies, and they ought to do it; yet all must be with a subordinate love, but they must love Christ with their chief love: otherwise they are not worthy to stand in the Relation of Disciples.

3. Christians ought to love Christ with ardency of Love: Luk. 24. 32. *And they said one to another did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the Way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* This burning love Christ enkindled in the heart of his Disciples, and this burning love Christ requireth of all Christians; *Cant.* 8. 6, 7. *Love is strong as Death, the coals thereof are coals of Fire which hath a vehement Flame. Many Waters cannot quench Love, neither can the Floods drown it.* Such a strong vehement ardent flaming love Christians should have unto Jesus Christ which all the waters of Affliction

may not be able to quench, which no Flouds of Temptations or Persecutions may be able to drown and overwhelm. Therefore

4. Christians ought to love Christ with constancy of Love. Having begun to love him, they ought to continue to love him and to love him unto the end: as they ought to be constant in their Obedience, and to persevere in their other Graces: so they ought to be constant and to persevere in this Grace of love to Christ.

## SECTION VI.

Seventhly, THe seventh thing is to shew, why true Christians do love Christ, whom they have never seen.

*Rea.* 1. True Christians do love Christ because of the need which they have of him. Men do love their necessary food, without which their Bodies would starve with hunger: Men do love their necessary raiment and habitations, without which in Winter Seasons their bodies would starve with cold. Men do love their necessary Friends, upon whom (under God) they have their dependance, and from whom they have all their subsistence: But no thing in the World, or friend in the World, is so needful to the Body, as the Lord Jesus Christ is unto the soul: and as the excellencies of the soul, are far beyond the Excellencies of the Body; so the necesities of the soul, are far beyond the necesities of the body: which necesities can be answered by none but Jesus Christ; and therefore true Christians do love him. At first conversion when they were convinced of sin, awakened out of their carnal security, O what need had they, and did they see they had of Christ,

Chriſt! they perceived themſelves to be loſt, and that it was Chriſt only that could ſave them; they felt the Wounds of conſcience, and it was Chriſt only that could Heal them, they feared the wrath of a ſin revenging God, and it was Chriſt only that could deliver them. The Remiſſion, Reconciliation, and Salvation, which they had by Chriſt, did lay the firſt foundation of a moſt endeared love unto Chriſt; And ſtill they perceive a continual need of Chriſt, to procure daily pardon for them, and to convey dayly ſupplyes of Grace unto them: They have need of Chriſt, when they are dark to enlighten them; when they are dead to quicken them: when they are ſtreightned, to enlarge them; when they are weak, to ſtrengthen them; when they are ſad, to comfort them; when they are tempted, to ſuccour them; when they are fallen, to raiſe them; when they are in doubts, to reſolve them: when they are under fears, to encourage them: when they ſtagger, to eſtabliſh them, when they wander, to reſtore them Chriſt, and none but Chriſt, can do all this, and more than this for them, and therefore becauſe of the need and uſefulneſs of Chriſt, true Chriſtians do love him.

*Rea.* 2. True Chriſtians do love an unſeen Chriſt, becauſe of the lovelineſs of Chriſt; which lovelineſs though it be not and cannot here be ſeen by the eye of the body, yet it is evident unto the eye of faith: ſee the Deſcription which is given of Chriſt the Beloved, by his ſpouſe the Church, *Cant.* 5. 9. The Daughters of *Jeruſalem* there enquire of the love ſick Spouſe, *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, O thou faireſt amongſt Women? what is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?* Hereupon the Spouſe giveth a Deſcription, *ver.* 10. *My beloved*

*is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand*: and after she had set forth his Graces, Beauties, and excellent accomplishments, in Metaphors taken from beauties in the several parts of mans body, in the 11, 12, 13, and 14. *verses*, she concludeth in the 15 and 16. *verses*, *His Countenance is as* Lebanon, *excellent as the Cedars. His Mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend O Daughters of Jerusalem.* The Spouse is here acknowledged to be the fairest amongst Women, and not only by the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, but her beloved, who had a more curious eye, doth both commend her loveliness and admire it: *ch.* 6. 4, 5. *Thou art beautiful O my Love as* Tirzah, *comely as Jerusalem: Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me*, and *ver.* 10. *Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an Army with* Banners? But what beauty is there then in the Beloved? if the Church be beautiful beyond all other of the children of men, how beautiful is Jesus Christ from whom the Church doth derive all its comeliness? He is said to be *White and Ruddy*, that shews the beauty of his Face; and his countenance is said to be *as Lebanon, and like the lofty Cedars thereof*, that shews the Majesty of his Face. His *mouth* is said to be *most sweet*; and sweet it is indeed, in regard of the gracious words which proceed from it: no Doctrine so sweet as Christs Doctrine, no Precepts so sweet as Christs Precepts, no Promises so sweet as Christs promises. But to sum up all Excellencies and Perfections in a word he is said to be *altogether lovely*, there is no Person or Thing in the World that is most lovely, which can properly be called altogether lovely: Many defects may be found in the most amiable persons, and much insufficiency may be found in the most desirable things; but Christ is altogether

gether lovely; unlovely in no respect, there being no Spot or Blemish, no Defect or Imperfection to be found in him: and he is lovely in every respect, there is an incomparable and transcendent amiableness in Christs person in every regard. In the person of Christ the Humane Nature and the Divine Nature are in conjunction, he is most lovely in regard of both. His Humane Nature is compounded of Body and Soul. His Body is most beautiful, a most glorious beauty and lustre is put upon it: whatever it were in his state of humiliation, be sure it hath a glorious beauty now in his state of Exaltation. It is called σωμα της δόξης a glorious body, *Phil.* 3, 21. If the face of *Moses* did shine with resplendent Glory, after his conversing Forty dayes with God in Mount *Sinai* which was Below; how doth the Body of Christ shine, which hath been above sixteen hundred years in Mount *Sion* which is above? I am perswaded that Christs Body is the most beautifull of all visible creatures. But the beauty of Christs soul doth excel: No creature whatever, hath such shining excellencies as are in the soul of Christ, All the excellencies that are, or ever were in any creature, are like a Feather laid in the Ballance with the exceeding weight of his glorious Excellencies and Perfections. Christ excelled the most excellent Men that ever lived, as to spiritual endowments, when he was here upon the earth: he excelled *Moses* in Meekness, *Solomon* in Wisdom, *Job* in Patience: and how much doth he excel now he is in Heaven? He excelleth not only the Spirits of just men made perfect, but also the most glorious and holy Angels that never sinned. If any creatures have Wisdom, it is but a Beam. Christ is the Sun; If they have goodness, it is but a drop in Christ is the Ocean; If they have Holiness, it is but a spark or dark shaddow, Christ is the brightness of his

Fathers Glory: If they have the Spirit, they have it but in some measure, the Spirit is given to Christ without Measure *Joh.*3.34. Christ is most lovely in his Manhood, so nearly united unto his Godhead: and how lovely is he in his Godhead? as God he is equall in all glorious excellencies with the Father. Christs Godhead implyeth excellency of being, he calleth himself *I am*, *Joh.*8.28. Excellency of Glory, therefore called *the Lord of Glory*, 1 *Cor.*2.8. and *King of Glory*, Psal.24.7. *Lift up your heads O yee Gates, and be ye lift up, ye Everlasting Doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.* This is Interpreted by some, to be spoken of Christs Ascention, and the Angels and Saints making way for his triumphant entrance, and possession of his heavenly Pallace. Many Descriptions are given in the New Testament, of this lovely Person; I shall mention only one, *Col.*1. 15,16,17,18,19. *Who is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every creature; For by him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: all things were made by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the First born from the Dead, that in all things he might have the* Preeminence. *For it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell.* If we read, believe and consider this great description of Christ, we must needs see and say, that Christ is most excellent and amiable, and that no beloved is like to the beloved of true Christians: therefore it is that true Christians do love Christ, because of his lovelines.

*Rea.*3. True Christians do love Christ, because of his love, His love which he doth bear to them, He loves them

them with a first love, and with a Free love: He loves them with a tender and compassionate love, with an active or doing love, with a passive or suffering love: his love is infinite without bounds or limits, it is superlative without comparison; Transcendent beyond comprehension; everlasting without change, & which will have no end or conclusion. He loved them when they were polluted in their sins, and washt them with his own blood; he loved them when they were naked in their Souls, and clothed them with the robes of his righteousness: He loves them in their sickness and sorrows, and is their comforter: He loves them in their wants and straits, and is their benefactor, he loves them in Life, and is the Life of their Souls; he loves them at death, and is the Stay of their Hearts: And he loves them after Death, and will be their Portion for ever. There is great reason that true Christians should love Christ, because of his loveliness; and there is further reason that they should love him, because of his love, especially when both are incomparable, both are incomprehensible. I shall further speak (God willing) unto both these with other reasons, under the motives in the exhortation to excite Christians to the love of Christ.

## SECTION VIII.

*Use* 1. FOr Information hence learn, that there are but few true Christians in the world, because there are so few that love this *unseen Christ*. There are many Christians in Name, few Christians in deed & in truth. The time hath been when openly to profess the name of a Christian, did argue true love unto Jesus Christ: I mean in the primitive times, when Chri-

Christians were persecuted by the Heathens, as in the Ten first dreadful persecutions under the Heathen Emperours; when the world was watered with Christian blood, then especially at some times and in some yea most places, whoever openly acknowledged themselves to be Christians they exposed themselves unto Imprisonments, Racks, Tortures, Burnings and the most cruel deaths; It was the Truth and Strength of Love unto Jesus Christ, which carried them thorow such great sufferings, as many did in those dayes undergo for the sake of Jesus Christ; But now there are multitudes of bare nominal Christians, they call themselves Christians being baptized in Christs name, but they are altogether without love to Christ, whose Name they bare: Surely there are but few, not only in the Christian World, but even in *England* (where Christianity is to be found in as great purity as in any place) that love Jesus Christ in sincerity. No grossely ignorant persons do truly love Christ; such as don't know Christ, they can't love him; *ignoti nulla cupido*, there is no desire after, nor love unto an unknown thing: An unknown evil cannot be hated, and an unknown good cannot be loved. No grossely erroneous persons, do truely love Christ; such as do not receive Christs truths they cannot love Christs Person; Joh. 14. 23. *If any man love me he will keep my words.* The words of Christ do include, not only the words of his Precepts, but also the words of his Doctrine: such as erre grossely, I mean in the fundamental truths of Christianity, they are no friends to Christ, but his enemies, so far are they from true love unto him. No grossely wicked persons, do truly love Christ: such as profane persons, who blaspheme the name of God in their hideous Oaths; the love of Christ doth teach an holy Awe and Reverence

of

of Gods Name; such are Persecuters of Gods people for righteousnes sake. How can they love the head, that hate the members? Christ accounteth himself to be persecuted, in the persecution of his members: *Act.* 9 4. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me*, and v. 5. *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*: and surely persecutors of Christ do not love Christ. Such are Scoffers at Religion, who deride holines and mock at the name of a saint or godly person, whereby they evidently shew their contempt of the holines of Christ, from whom the Saints derive all theirs: and how can they love Christ that do contemne him and his Image. No unrighteous persons do truly love Christ, whether they be so in regard of distributive justice, or in regard of commutative justice; whether they be unrighteous in Execution of judgement, in distribution of Rewards or Punishments, and whether they be unrighteous in their Traffick and Dealings, Christ strictly requireth justice and righteousnes, and how can they love him, that do not keep this commandement? No covetous persons do truly love Christ, the Apostle saith, 1 Joh. 2. 15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* And I may say that if any man love the world, (that is, with his chief love) the love of the Son is not in him: the love cannot be chiefly set upon things below here on earth, and upon Christ who is above in heaven. No licentious persons do truly love Christ: no Drunkards, Adulterers, or any that indulge themselves in unlawful delights; the love of Christ doth teach us to deny such lusts, and to mortifie them. No meer civil persons that are unconverted, no hypocrites that have a forme of godlines, but are without the power of it, do truly love Christ: the former may be loving and courteous unto men, but they have no love to Christ: the

latter may profess love to Christ, and seem to love him, but they do not really love him. In a word none who are under the reigning power of any sin, do truly love Christ: The reign of sin is in the heart, and this is inconsistent with the love of Christ in the heart. Now let us separate all these forementioned persons, from the rest; Grossely ignorant persons, grossely erroneous persons, grossely wicked persons, the prosane, the persecutors of Gods people, the Scoffers at Religion, all unrighteous persons, all covetous Persons, Drunkards, Adulterers, and all Licentious Persons; meer civil persons, Hypocrites, and all that are under the reigning power of sin, and how few will there be left that do truly love Christ! and by consequence there will appear but very few that are true Christians,

## SECTION IX.

*Use* 2. FOr Examination. Here you may know whether you are true Christians by the tryall of your Love unto Jesus Christ. Examine your selves therefore, whether you love Jesus Christ whom you have never seen; the most in the world do love truly those persons and things only which they have seen: but can you say that you sincerily and chiefly do love Jesus Christ whom you have not seen? the love of the most doth arise from the notice which the eye doth give of the Objects beloved: but doth your love arise from the notice which the ear hath given by the word, of the Amiableness which here is in Christ?

Qu. *How may we know whether we have true love to Jesus Christ?*

*Ans.* You may know the truth of your love to Jesus Christ,

Christ, 1. By your desires after Christs presence. 2. By your prizing and frequenting those wayes wherein Christ is to be found, and seeking him therein. 3. By your love of Christs image. 4. By your obedience to Christs commandements.

First, By *your desires after Christs Presence*; wherever there is a great love to any person, there is a desire after the presence of that person: do you sincerily and earnestly desire Christs presence? there is a twofold presence of Christ, his gracious presence here, and his glorious presence at the last day.

1. There is Christs Gracious presence here, Joh. 14. 18. *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.* You desire that such Friends and Relations would come unto you, but do you desire chiefly that Christ would come unto you? Christ cometh to his Disciples in a way of gracious communication, in a way of gracious manifestation, and in a way of sweet consolation which doth result from both.

1. Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of gracious communication? are your desires after communication of spiritual light from Christ to teach and guide you: of spiritual life from Christ to quicken and encourage you, of spiritual strength from Christ, to support you under burdens, and enable you unto duties? do you earnestly desire communications of all kinds, and further degrees of grace out of that fullness of grace which is in Christ? do you hunger and thirst after Christs righteousness, not only that it may be imputed to you for your Justification, but also that it may be more and more imparted unto you for your further sanctification, that you might be brought and hereby wrought into a more perfect conformity & likeness unto Jesus Christ: this is an evidence of true love.

2. Do

2. Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of gracious manifestation? Joh. 14. 21. *He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, & will manifest my self unto him.* Do you earnestly desire the fulfilling of this promise? that Christ would discover to you more of the loveliness of his person, and of the love of his heart? are you grieved when your beloved doth withdraw himself? when the curtain is drawn, and a cloud doth interpose between you and this Sun of Righteousness; when he hideth and vaileth his face from you? and do you long after Christs returns, and the discoveries of himself unto you? *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*; *Be as a Roe or young Hart, upon the mountains of spices: Leap over the mountains, and skip over the hills, and make haste unto my soul, which is sick of Love for thee in thy absence from me: O that I might see thy face which is so fair! that I might hear thy voice which is so sweet! that I might feel thy Presence which is so refreshing! O that I might behold thy heart-ravishing smiles! Say Lord that I am thine, and thou art mine, that thou hast loved me, and given thy self for me; that thy love to me was from everlasting, and that it is unchangeable.* Are these or such like the breathings of your souls? such are the breathings of love to Christ.

3 Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of sweet consolation, which doth result from this communication and manifestation? are you desirous after the Oil of gladness, which Christ is anointed withal; that he would give you of the Unction of the Spirit not only to sanctifie you, but also to comfort you? do you desire that your hearts might be filled with spiritual joyes, the joyes of the Holy Ghost, which are unspeakable and full of glory? do you desire the comforts which Christ doth give, beyond all the comforts which

which the World and the Fleſh can give? the comforts which come in at the door of Faith, beyond all the comforts that come in at the door of ſenſe; thoſe joyes which are in Chriſt, beyond all joyes that can be found in the moſt ſweet and deſireable creature-enjoyment? this evidenceth true love to Chriſt. Thus do you deſire Chriſts gracious preſence.

2. And do you deſire alſo Chriſts glorious preſence at the Laſt day? When he promiſeth, *Surely I come quickly*, can your hearts make anſwer as *Rev.* 22. 20. *Amen, even ſo come Lord Jeſus*? are you glad you live ſo near the End of the World, that the Lord is at hand, that the coming of the Lord draweth nearer and nearer every day? can you lift up your heads with joy, when you look towards the place where the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is, at *the right hand of the Throne of the Majeſty on high*: and think with comfort, that *yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not now tarry much longer*: that within a while *Chriſt will deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout*, the Lord with the *Sound of the Trumpet*, and that your eyes ſhall *ſee him in the brightneſs of his Glory and Majeſty*? Do you look and long for the day of Chriſts glorious appearance from heaven, when you ſhall be awakened out of your Graves (where you may take a ſhort ſleep before) and be gathered together by the Angels, and be caught up in the clouds, and there (in ſhining garments of Immortality on your Bodies and of Chriſts unſpotted righteouſneſs in your ſouls) be brought with ſhoutings and acclamations of joy and Triumph into his preſence, who will then acquit you graciouſly from all Sin and puniſhment, own you openly for his faithful Servants, crown you glorioufly before the whole World, and receive you to live and reign with him to all Eternity? Have you ſuch deſires as

theſe?

these? If some of you say, you are afraid of Christs glorious appearance, lest then you should be rejected because you fear you are not ready and prepared; yet can you say also from your hearts, that you desire above all things that you may be ready, that you endeavour to make ready, that it is your grief you are no more ready and that if you were ready, and were assured of your Interest in Christ, you could desire that Christ would come immediately; and that you desire no greater happiness and felicity, than to live with Christ in Glory: and that you account the presence of Christ in Heaven to be the happiness of heaven? These are evidences of true desires after Christs glorious presence, and of sincere love to Christ.

Secondly, You may know your love to Christ, by your prizing and frequenting those wayes wherein Christ is to be found, and seeking him therein Such are the wayes of his Ordinances both publick and private. Christs way is in his Sanctuary, and in his Ordinances he may be found; do you give your attendance unto Ordinances, publick prayer, the preaching of the word the Sacrament of the Lords Supper? and do you prize these Ordinances because of the Stamp of Christs Institution upon them, because of Christs presence in them, and because they are a meanes of bringing you and Christ together? and when you are under Ordinances do you diligently seek after Christ in Ordinances? Don't you rest in the outside and carnall part of Ordinances, in meeting with Gods People there? or do you design, desire and endeavour after something more inward and spiritual and incomparably sweet, that you meet with Christ there, that you may have Fellowship with the Father and the Son therein? and upon this account can you

you say as *David*: *How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord!* and *A day in thy Courts is better than a thousand*, Psal. 84. 1. And, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple*; Psal. 27. 4. Do you also seek after Christ in your Families, and in your closets? do you seek him in secret prayer and meditation? your love to Christ doth express it self in your desires: your desires do shew themselves in your seeking after Christ in his wayes

Thirdly, you may know your love to Christ, by your love of Christs Image: there is the Image of Christ on his Word, and there is the Image of Christ on his People.

1. Do you love the Image of Christ on his Word? as *Cæsars* Coin did bear *Cæsars* Image and Superscription, so the Word of the Scriptures, which is the Word of Christs, doth bear Christs Image and Superscription. Do you love the Scriptures because of Christs Image which is upon them? do you love the Word of Doctrine in the Scripture, because of the Image of Christs Truth and Wisdom upon it? do you love the Word of Precepts in the Scriptures, because of the Image of Christs holiness upon it? do you love the Word of threatnings in the Scriptures, because of the Image of Christs righteousness upon it? do you love the Word of Promises in the Scriptures, because of the Image of Christs Goodness, Grace and Love upon it? You have Christs Word in your Bibles, and sometimes sounding in your Ears, but doth the Word of Christ dwell in your hearts? you receive Christs word in the Light of it, do you receive his Word in the Love of it?

2. Do

2. Do you love Christs Image on his People? If you love not your Brother whom you have seen, how can you love your Lord whom you have not seen? All Christs Disciples do bear Christs Image; if you love the Original you will love the Picture, although it be but imperfectly drawn, If you love the perfect goodness & holiness which is in Christ, you will love the goodness and holiness which you see in the Saints, although they have it but in an imperfect Measure: do you love Christs Disciples? and that because of Christs Image, although they differ from you in some opinions which are circumstantial?

Fourthly, You may know your love to Christ, by your obedience unto his commandements, Joh. 14. 15 *If you love me keep my Commandements*: and *ver.* 21. *He that hath my Commandements and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* You have Christs commandements, do you keep them? you know them, do you practice them? your Love to Christ is known by your obedience unto Christ. If Christ be your beloved, he is also your Lord; if you have true affection for him, you yeild subjection unto him: If you love Christ, you are carefull to please Christ; you are not the Servants of the Flesh, to take care to please the Flesh, but you are the servants of Christ, to take care above all persons and all thing to please Christ; if you love Christ you are fearful of giving just occasion of offence unto men, but above all you are fearful of displeasing and offending your Lord. Do you labour so to walk that you may please Christ in the way of sincere and universal obedience? are you hearty in your obedience unto Christ? have you a respect to all his commandments? is it your grief that you fall short in your obedience unto Christ? if you can say in the presence of the Lord, and your hearts do not give

give your tongues the lye, that you don't live and allow your selves in the practice of any known sin which Christ forbiddeth, nor in the neglect of any known duty which Christ commandeth, this is a sure evidence of true love to Jesus Christ. Thus for the tryal of your love unto Christ.

## SECTION III.

*Use* 3. FOr reproof.

1. Of all such as have no love at all unto this unseen Christ? and will not the use of Information, together with the use of tryal leave a conviction upon many of you that you are without this love? Suffer then the word of reproof; what, are you creatures made by Christ, and made for Christ, and yet have no love to him? are you rational creatures, have you souls capable of knowing him and loving him, and yet have no love? are you Christians and not love Christ? baptized in Christs Name, and yet have you no love to Christs person? are some of you Professors, and yet not love Christ? make a show of devotion, and yet without any true affection to the object of your worship? Sinners though you have not seen Christ, yet have you not heard of him? and have you not heard enough to engage and draw forth your love unto Christ. What do you think? is there such a person as Jesus Christ, or is there not? have you no Bibles? and if you have, have you not read therein the History concerning Jesus Christ, and what do you think of that History, is it true or is it false, do you think the Gospel to be a cunningly devised fable? are not the Scriptures which contain this Gospel, the very word of the true God who cannot

lye? are there not such characters of Divinity upon them, as are sufficient to evince their divine original to any that search into them, and do not willfully shut their eyes against the light which there doth shine? And if it be so that there is indeed such a person as Jesus Christ (as there is nothing more true) how is it that you have no love unto him? do not the Scriptures reveal and set forth Christ; as the most excellent and amiable person? and yet do you not love him? can you love persons & things that are but Imperfectly lovely, and not love Jesus Christ who is altogether lovely, can you love one of great honour that hath but some inferior power and authority, and not love Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of Glory, who hath all power and authority both in Heaven and Earth? can you love such as have Wisdom and Learning, though it be terrene, and not love Jesus Christ who is the wisdom of the Father, who knoweth all things, and whose wisdom is divine? can you love such as are liberal and bountiful, and not love Christ whose bounty is superlative, and whose gifts are most rich and transcendent? can you love friends that are kind, and not love Jesus Christ, who is the best friend that ever the children of men had? can you love a Benefactor that feeds you, and cloathes you, and giveth money to you, and yet not love Christ who offereth to feed your hunger-starved souls with the bread of life, to cloth your naked souls with the robes of His righteousness, and to give the spiritual Riches of Grace to you, the least dram of which is of more worth than all the riches of the Earth? can you love riches and not love Christ in whom there are treasures, and by whom you may have not only spiritual riches here, but also the heavenly inheritance hereafter? can you love honour, and not love Christ by whom you may have

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the highest dignities, the honour of children to the King of Heaven now, and a Crown of Glory in the other world? can you love liberty and not love Christ by whom you may be made free from the Slavery of the Devil and your own lusts? can you love safety and not love Christ who is the only Saviour of mankind, and who alone puts you in safety from the reach of the worst of Enemies, and the worst of evils? can you love peace and not love Christ by whom you may have peace with God, and peace in your own conscience? can you love pleasures and delights, and not love Christ by whom you may have joys unspeakable and full of glory, besides those everlasting pleasures which are to come? without love to Christ you are under the guilt of all your sins; neither your original sin, nor any of your actual sins are pardoned, they all lye upon your own score, and you must answer for all your selves, and how fearful is your account like to be! without love to Christ you are under the curse, not only under the curse of the Law for your breach of the Law, but also under the curse of the Gospel for disobedience to this command of the Gospel which requireth you to love the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 *Cor.* 16.22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha*, that is, let him be cursed, till the Lord come, and when the Lord cometh will he take off the curse from you? no, he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance upon you, having threatned then to punish all such with everlasting destruction, as shall be found to have disobeyed the Gospel; and what then is like to become of you? *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* those wicked Cities will then be punished dreadfully, with a worse fire than that which was rained down from heaven, & consumed their persons & habitations together:

I mean, with the fire of Hell, which will be kindled and kept alive unto Eternity by the breath of the Almighty, but you who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ notwithstanding all discoveries of him, invitations to him, and proffers of kindnesses by him, you will be punished more dreadfully than the wicked *Sodomites*, it will be more tollerable in the day of Judgement for them than for you: the torments of Hell will be intollerable by any, but they will be most intollerable by Gospel-sinners: the fire of Hell will burn upon you the most fiercely, and the scourge of conscience will lash you the most furiously. Consider this all yee that have no love to Christ, otherwise when he cometh to judgement he will tear you to pieces and there will be none to deliver you: if you have not the sweet fire of love to Christ enkindled in your hearts here, you will be thrown into the dreadfull fire of Hell which will burn you everlastingly.

2. This reproves such of you as have some love, but it is very little love to Jesus Christ; you that love Christ is not your love very small, not only in comparison with his love to you, but also in comparison with the love which some Christians have attained unto? how strong was the love of the Apostles unto Christ when they left all and followed him, especially after the Resurrection of Christ and his Ascension into Heaven, when the Holy Ghost was sent down and sat in the likeness of fiery tongues upon them: O, what a fire of love unto Christ was there then enkindled within them. Hence that bold profession which they make of Christ before the chief Priests and Elders, *Act.* 4. Hence their rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ, when they were beaten for their owning and preaching of him, *Act.* 5, 41. The love

love of *Peter* and *John* was great unto Christ, and the love of *Paul* was not inferiour unto the love of the chiefest Apostles: hence it was that he took such pains to preach the Gospel in so many parts of the world even from *Jerusalem* and round about unto *Illyricum*, *Rom.* 15. 19. See also how he approves himself to be a Minister of Christ, and giveth evidences of his strong love to his Master, 2 *Cor.* 11. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. *Are they Ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool, I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in Deaths oft: of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one: Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned, thrice I suffered Shipwrack, a Night and a day I have been in the deep, in journeying often, in perils of Waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils by mine own Countreymen, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderness, in perils in the Sea, in perils among false brethren: in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches: who is weak and I am not weak? who is offended and I burn not?* and chap 12. 10. *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake.* The ground of all which was the love of Christ which did constrain him, as 1 *Cor.* 5. 14. he had such a love to Christ that he professeth, *Philip.* 1. 21. *To me to live is Christ, and to dye is gain.* Christ was his life, and his life was wholy at Christs devotion.

But where is such love now to be found, I might speak also of the love of some ancient Fathers, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Jerome* and others: take one instance in *Jerome*, who thus expresseth his love unto Christ, *If my Father were weeping on his knees before me, my mother hanging*

*ing on my Neck behind me, my Brethren, Sisters and Kinsfolk howling on every side, to retain me in a sinfull course; I would sling my Mother to the Ground, run over my Father, despise all my Kindred, and tread them under my Feet, that I might run unto Christ.* How little is your love in comparison with the love of those famous Heroes, I mean those eminent Martyrs, who have despised the Flames and endured such racking and torturing deaths, for the love which they have born unto Jesus Christ; the fire of their Love burning stronger within them, than the fire without them in which their bodies were consumed. Is not your love also small in comparison with the love of our late Reformers, which fired them with such courage and resolution, as to withstand a whole world of Antichristian Fury and Opposition? Is your love comparable to that of many Eminent Divines, and private Christians of our own Nation, of the age immediately going before, who are now asleep in their Graves; but how few are there come up in their rooms? It is observed, and it is greatly to be lamented, that there is of late years, a great decay in the Power of Godliness, amongst those that are sincere: and is it not evident in the great decay of love, even in true Christians unto Jesus Christ, are not you dwarfs in comparison with others: are not you Babes in Christ, and weaklings in your love to Christ; Is it not evident, that you have but little love to Christ, when he is but little in your thoughts and meditations: the thoughts are the handmaids of the Love: where the Love is strong and ardent, there many thoughts will be attending upon it; but will not your hearts tell you that your thoughts of Christ are very few, you can think often of your Food, but how little do your

thoughts

thoughts feed upon Christ, who is the bread of life, You can often think of your Rayment, but how little do you think of the Robes of Christs Righteousnes, You can think often of your earthly Friends, but how little do you think of Jesus Christ, your Friend in Heaven, Objects of Sense are often not only in your eyes, but also in your thoughts; but how little is Christ entertained in your thoughts, who is the Object of Faith, Moreover, doth it not argue little Love to Christ, that you speak so little of him and for him, in your converse one with another. If you had much Love to Christ, would not this Love breath forth more in your Discourses. You can readily speak of your selves, and do often either directly or obliquely commend your selves, which discovers your great Self-love; how little do you commend your Lord and Master, and extoll his excellencies with your lips? and doth not this evidence that you have but little love to him in your hearts You can readily discourse of News and Publick Occurrences (which is lawfull and needfull, so that due limits be observed) but when you leave Christ quite out of your Discourse, it shews that you have not abundance of Love to him, because out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth will speak. Such as have much love to the World, will speak of their Riches; such as have much love to pleasures, will be often speaking of that subject; such as love their Friends much, will be often speaking and commending of them, when they are in company; and when you speak but little of Christ, it is a sign that you love him but little. Doth not the little Zeal which you have for Christs Honour in the World, argue that you have but little Love to him: where is your activity for Christ to promote his Interest amongst those

Relations and Friends, that you have acquaintance with, do you labour all you can, to bring others into the wayes of God, and into acquaintance with Christ? Besides, will not your little secret Devotion, argue your little Affection unto Christ, will not your closets or other retiring places witness how little you are in secret prayer and converse with Christ there? Brief and straitned prayer in secret, doth argue a heart straitned in love to Jesus Christ. Doth not your backwardness to the exercise of this love to Christ, shew the weakness of your love, how slow of heart are you to the Love of Christ? how hard to be perswaded? you need not be perswaded to love your Wives, if they be kind and helpful; you need not be perswaded to love your children, if they be pretty and hopefull; you need not be perswaded to love your friends, if they be friendly and faithful: and yet whatever attractives of love, the most strong of any, be in Jesus Christ, you are backward to this Love.

Need I say more to convince you, that you have but little Love to Christ? will not your own Conscience from these clear evidences sufficiently witness the thing And now Christians think what a Sin, what a Shame, what a folly it is, that you should have so little Love unto Jesus Christ: If it be so great a Sin for such as are strangers unto Christ, to have no Love at all to him, that it brings them under the most dreadful curse: surely it cannot be a small Sin, that you (who are his true Disciples) should have but little Love unto him; is it not very displeasing to the Father, that you should have but little love to his Son? if he do not hate you because of your Relation unto Christ; yet, is he not angry with you, for the lukewarmness of your Affection unto Christ which Sin is aggravated by the nearness of your Rela-

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tion. Is it not dishonourable unto Christ, that you should have so little Love to him? don't you in effect say, there is no great worth or Amiableness in him, when you have no great Love unto him? are you not hereby ingrateful unto Christ, beyond what can be perallel'd by any ingratitude unto the most obliging Earthly friend? Is it not your shame, that you should have so little Love to Christ, when he doth so much deserve your Love? Besides the infinite excellencies and perfections which are in his person; doth not his Infinite kindness unto you, call for (not only the Truth, but also) the strength of your Love? Think what he hath done for you: think what he hath suffered for you; think what he hath purchased for you: think what he hath promised to you; think what he hath laid out for you; think what he hath laid up for you; and yet to have but little Love to Christ? yet to make such poor returns! Moreover, is it not your folly to have but little Love to Christ? Don't you hereby bereave your selves, or debarre your selves of such peace as passeth all understanding; of such sweetness and comfort both in the strength of your love, and in the sense of his love, as is inconceivable? is not injury and mischief unto your selves, the consequent of your little Love unto Christ? must you not draw on Heavily in the wayes of God, as *Pharaoh* when his chariot-wheels were taken off? Love to Christ is like wheels, in your motion for Christ, and like Oil to the wheels, which makes you ready unto any good work which he doth call you unto but when you have but little love unto Christ, you must needs be more slow in your motions, more sluggish in Christ's service; you will not, you cannot take that pains in the work of the Lord, and be so Zealous as you might and should be for your Master's Glory.

To conclude, if you have but little love to Christ, you will be apt to faint in the day of Adversity, to shrink when you are called to take up his Cross and suffer for his sake: lesser sufferings will discompose you, greater sufferings will affrighten and amaze you, and you will be in danger of turning fearful Apostates in time of great Tryals, there is need of great Love to Christ, as well as great Faith, to carry you thorow sufferings with courage that you may persevere unto the end.

## SECTION XI.

*Use* 4. FOr Exhortation unto the love of Jesus Christ, whom you have never seen, this is the use chiefly designed in the choice of this subject, and which I shall most largely insist upon. In the Prosecution of it, I shall give some Motives, and then some Directions.

The Motives to induce and excite you unto the love of this unseen Christ, may be drawn 1. From the consideration of what Christ is, 2. From the consideration of Christs Love. 3. From the consideration of Christs Benefits. 4 From the consideration of that love which Christians have, and should have unto Christ.

The first sort of Motives may be drawn from the consideration of what Christ is, and that 1. What he is in himself. 2. What he is to the Father. 3. What he is unto true Christians.

First, *Consider what Christ is in Himself.*

In generall, He is the most amiable person and the most sutable Object for your love. If you ask of the dayes which are past, which were before you, since the

the day that God created Man upon the Earth; if you seek from one side of Heaven unto the other; if you make enquiry into all the parts of the Earth, you will never find that either there ever was or is to be found any person so lovely, so beautifull and so every way deserving your Love, as the Lord Jesus Christ; there is a Matchless, Transcendent, and Incomparable Beauty and excellency in him. How passionately are some fooliſh Men in Love with the externall beauty which they see in some Women: the exact symetry of parts, and comely Proportion of the body; the amiable Features and lovely Mixtures of colours in the Face, the Beauty of the Eyes, in their Spirit their Quick and Graceful motions, and amorous Glances; How doth this raviſh the hearts of some fond Lovers, although the most beautiful body in the World, is no better than painted clay, dirt and corruption, enclosed in a fair skin, which sickness will cause to look Pale and Wan, Death will quite Marr and Spoil. But the amiableness and Beauty of Christ is more Transcendent and Permanent, and therefore a more fit Object for your Love. Christ is fairer than the children of Men; he is all fair without any Spot, altogether lovely without any blemish or deformity. I have already spoken of the glorious Beauty which is in Christs Glorified Body, the most lovely of any visible creature which God hath made: and also of the shining Excellencies which are in Christs glorified soul; so nearly joyned to the Divinity; could we suppose all the Loveliness that ever was seen, or found in the most lovely persons that ever lived, to meet in one person: how lovely would that person be; yet such, though never so resplendent Beauty, would be but a dark Shaddow, compared with the Brightness

of

of Christs most beautifull Person. Can you love the imperfect Beauty which you see in creatures, and will you not love the perfect beauty which there is in Christ? can you love a fading Beauty which soon withereth like the flower, and will you not love Christ, whose beauty never decays, but alwayes doth abide more fresh than Beauty in the flower of Youth? can you be soon affected with beautiful objects which are before the eye of your sense, and will you not be affected with this far more beautiful Object, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is so clearly discernable by the eye of Faith, If the eye of your Faith were open and clear, to look upon the transcendent amiableness which is in Christ, you could not chuse but love him: could you see the glances of his eye, and the sweet smiles of his lovely face, as some have seen, your hearts would be overcome and ravished with love, and filled with extacies of joy and ineffable delight.

More particularly, there are the most amiable qualifications in Christs Person, to attract and draw forth your Love; I shall instance in these six, 1. *His Greatness and Authority.* 2. *His Holiness and Purity.* 3. *His Wisdom and Omniscience.* 4. *His Truth and Fidelity.* 5. *His Fulness and All-sufficiency.* 6. *His Kindness and Mercy.*

1. *Consider Christs Greatness and Authority,* Aquila non capit muscas, *The Eagle doth not pursue after Flies:* Great Souls are not affected, except it be with great things; there is none so great as Jesus Christ: he is most great in honour and dignity, he is most great in power and authority. Excellency of Majesty, doth greatly engage the Love, and command the hearts as well as the Obedience of Subjects: and those Princes that have the greatest power and authority, are the darlings of the people, when they don't abuse their place by unrighte-

righteousness and cruelty, by usurpation and tyranny. If power be managed with clemency, and Authority with Kindness towards those that are under command: so highly do Princes advance themselves hereby in the Esteem and Love of their people, that they will be ready to spend their Estates, and venture their Lives in their Service. Christ is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, he is clothed with the highest honour, arrayed with the most excellent Majesty, decked with the largest power, and invested with the greatest Authority. He is the King and Lord of Glory, he is exalted to higher dignity then the greatest Potentate that ever lived upon the Earth: yea he is advanced above all Thrones and Dominions, and Principalities and Powers, of the glorious Angels which are in Heaven; *All Power is given to him in Heaven and Earth*, Mat. 28, 18. He doth what he will in Heaven the Angels are at his Back, and Execute his Will, go and come at his Command; and he hath Power on earth: He is the head of the Church, & head over all unto the Church; he can restrain his Enemies, and conquer them, and bring them under his feet at his pleasure; And whatever severity he doth shew sometimes in Executing his Judgements, and taking vengeance on the Wicked, he doth never abuse his Power by Unrighteousness: He is most just towards the worst, and punisheth them here lesse than their iniquities do deserve. But what kindness and clemency doth he shew to his own subjects and people? and will not you have a great love to so great a Person? should not the consideration of the high dignity of your Lord, raise your love of him unto a great heighth? when Christ hath such Authority, shall he not command your hearts? when Christ is invested with such power that he can defend you against the rage and cruelty of your

most powerful and malicious adversaries, will you not love greatly such a Person, as well as trust confidently under the shadow of his Government?

2. Consider Christs Holiness and Purity, some great Persons who abound in Wealth and Honour, who have some kind of amiable natural qualities, and acquired accomplishments which might render them very useful in their Countries, yet through their wickedness and debauchery, their filthiness and impurity, their impious and vicious lives, they stain all their other excellencies, and render themselves the objects of contempt and scorn, unto those who otherwise would bear great respect and love to them.

But Christ is most amiable for his holiness and Purity; he was holy in his birth; although born of a sinful women, yet he was born without sin; when he lived amongst impure sinners he kept his garments from all stains and spots, his heart and life were free from all pollutions, and never was he guilty of the least transgression either in action or the least inclination. O what an excellent Person was Christ when here upon the Earth! how glorious in holiness, what bright beams of perfect purity and exact innocency did Christ scatter in those dark places of the earth where he lived, and amongst those dark fullied sinners with whom he did converse! how then doth Christ shine in holiness, now he is entred into the Holy of Holies, which is above; and there doth converse with none but such as are Holy? I know because of Christs Holiness and Purity, he is the object of the hatred and enmity of the wicked and ungodly; because Christ is an enemy unto their darling and beloved lusts, they have an enmity against Christs Person: when he was here below he telleth his brethren, John 7. 7. *The World hateth me, because I testi-*

testifie of it, that the works thereof are evil, and the hatred of the world doth still abide upon the same account; Christ doth reprove the world of sin, and this the world cannot endure and away with; the beams of Christs Holiness doe offend their sore eyes, his holy precepts do offend their carnal hearts; yet notwithstanding this, he is a most sutable object for the love of Saints upon the account of his Holiness: such as are truely judicious will love them most who are best, and such are really the best Men and Women in the world, as are most holy: if you are Christs disciples indeed, you love holiness where ever you see it, and can you love the imperfect holiness which is in Gods people, and will you not love Christ who is perfectly, infinitely holy himself, and the spring of all that holiness, which is to be found in any of the children of Men? if there be such a wonderful lustre in the derived holiness of some, that it makes them to shine as lights in a dark World, what a wonderful transcendent lustre is there in the original holiness which is in Christ! which as it is matter of great admiration, so it calls for great affection, *Psal.* 119. 140 *Thy word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it.* Christ is the Word, not the written Word, but the Essential Word, and he is very pure, therefore you should love him.

3. Consider Christs Wisdome and Omniscience. Wisdom doth make the face to shine; Learning doth advance some very highly in esteem: such as know most, if their morals be sutable to their intellectuals, are most admired by those that understand what true worth is; especially if there be spiritual Wisdome in conjunction with natural and acquired, if there be much Grace in the heart as well as much knowledge in the head, how worthy are such to be beloved? *Daniel*

was

was a man of great learning and wisdome, skilled in all the learning of the *Chaldeans* which was not sinful and diabolical; and besides this he was endued with divine wisdome by the teachings of the Holy Spirit; the Angel told this *Daniel* more than once or twice, that he was a *Man greatly beloved*; he was greatly beloved by the Lord of Heaven, greatly beloved by his Prince on earth, and greatly beloved by his people, and by all, except some few that envied his prosperity and favor. *Daniels* Wisdom did render him so universally amiable; How then should Christ be beloved because of his Wisdom and knowledge, the wisdom of Christ is far beyond the Wisdome of *Daniel*, or the Wisdom of *Solomon* who was wiser than *Daniel*; these men had Wisdome which made them famous and esteemed in their day, but Christ is Wisdome, the Wisdome of the Father; they were children of wisdome, but Christ is the Father and Fountain of wisdome: they had some jewels of wisdome, but the treasures of wisdome are hid and laid up in Christ, *Col.* 2. 3. they had learning and knowledge but their knowledge was Ignorance compared with the knowledge of Christ, the greatest part of the things which they knew, being but the least part of the things which they knew not; they knew some things, but Christ is omniscient and knoweth all things, they knew many secrets of nature, but Christ knoweth the secrets of Heaven, the mind of God, and nothing is hid from him. How greatly beloved then should Christ be if you are wise you will, if you would be wise you must love Christ who is so infinitely wise himself, and who alone can make you truly wise.

4. Consider Christs Truth and Fidelity, truth and faithfulness are very rare in our dayes, when falshood and deceit do so much abound; what was said of old

*Isa*

*Iſa* 59 14.14. Truth faileth and falleth in the ſtreet, the ſame may be ſaid now; and therefore ſuch as are true without guile. Faithful without deceit, are worthy of great eſteem and love. But what love ſhould you give unto Chriſt, who is not only true, but truth it ſelf; who is moſt faithful in all his undertakings and promiſes; and never deceived any that put their truſt in him, who is often better than his word, never worſe? you will love a true and faithful Friend, and will you not love a true and faithful Chriſt, the beſt friend of the children of Men? as Chriſts faithfulneſs ſhould encourage your confidence in him, ſo it ſhould endear your love unto him.

5. Conſider Chriſts fulneſs and All-ſufficiency. Such as have large and plentiful Eſtates, are greatly beloved by the poor and indigent, if they find them alſo to have large hearts and open hands ready to diſtribute unto their wants and neceſsities: none have ſuch fulneſs and plenty as the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and none ſo willing to communicate of his fulneſs unto the wants of ſuch as are poor in Spirit, and ſenſible of their need, *Col.* 1. 19. *It hath pleaſed the Father that in him all fulneſs ſhould dwell.* There is not only plenty in him, but fulneſs: not the fulneſs of the ciſtern, but the fulneſs of the Fountain; not the fulneſs only of ſufficiency for himſelf, but the fulneſs of redundancy for his people; not ſome fulneſs for ſome things, but all fulneſs for all things that are good; not fulneſs for ſome time and to continue but for a while, but all fulneſs doth dwell in him, and abide for all his people throughout all Generations; and this not to depend upon the pleaſure of men whoſe minds may alter, but it hath pleaſed the Father, it dependeth upon the pleaſure of the Father who is always the ſame, and whoſe good will to his people is unchangeable. There

is a twofold fulneſs in Christ for his people here; beſides his fulneſs of Glory which hath a reference to Eternity. There is a fulneſs of Merit, and a fulneſs of Spirit: 1. A fulneſs of Merit, in that full and perfect Righteouſneſs which he hath wrought out for them, and which he doth impute unto them for their Juſtification. 2. There is a fulneſs of Spirit in Christ, the Spirit being given unto him without meaſure, which he doth impart & communicate unto them, for their Sanctification and Conſolation. Chriſtians you are empty, Chriſt is full; you are poor, Chriſt is rich; you are indigent, Chriſt is All-ſufficient: and will not you love Chriſt, who is able to do for you beyond what you are able to ask or think, and is as willing as he is able to ſupply all your Spiritual neceſſities? will you not love Chriſt who is an overflowing and everflowing Fountain of good, who hath inexhauſtible treaſures of Graces and Comforts in him, which are ſet open before you, and unto you, and every day you may freely come and fetch ſuch jewels out of this treaſury, as are of higher worth and greater uſe than any earthly riches in the greateſt plenty and abundance.

6 Conſider Chriſts kindneſs and mercy. All the kindneſs of Men is unkindneſs compared with the kindneſs of Chriſt, all the Mercies of Men are cruelty, compared with the Mercies of Chriſt. He is all kindneſs, all bowels, all compaſſion, all pity, all grace, all mercy to miſerable loſt mankind; I ſhall not enlarge here becauſe this will fall under the ſecond head of arguments, taken from the conſideration of Chriſts Love. And if you add the kindneſs and mercy of Chriſt to all his other excellencies and perfections, ſurely he will appear to have incomparably the greateſt attractives in him for Love, unto any that have not a very thick veil of unbelief before their eyes to hide him from their view.

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Secondly, Consider what Christ is to the Father. 1. He is most nearly related to him. 2. He is most dearly beloved by him.

1. Christ is most nearly related, and with all most perfectly like unto the Father. All the Creatures are related to God as their maker, but Gods children are more nearly related; the Saints are nearly related to God, who are his children by adoption and regeneration; the Angels are more nearly related to God who are his Sons by creation and never were separated from him by sin; but the Lord Jesus Christ is most nearly related unto God who is his Son by eternal Generation: thus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, and doth bear his Image most perfectly, being the brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person. This near Relation of Christ, and his likeness to the Father doth call for your strongest love; if you have reason to honour the Father, on the same account you have reason to honour the Son; if you have reason to love the Father, you have the same reason to love the Son. You will love the Sons of Princes, and will you not love the Son of God? you will love your own children who bear your own Image, and will not you love Christ who is the express Image of God? we read of Christ. *Phil.* 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God.* Christ (without Robbery or derogation unto God) is equal with God in all Glorious Excellencies and perfections, and therefore your highest and strongest love is his due, and without robbery you cannot withhold it from him.

2. Christ is most dearly beloved by the Father, 2 *Pet.* 1. 17 *For he received from God the Father, Honour & Glory, when there came such a voice to him, from the Excellent Glory: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,*

he then that is worthy of the Fathers love; surely is worthy of yours: he that is chiefly beloved by the Father should chiefly be beloved by you.

Thirdly, Consider what Christ is unto all true Christians: if you be such, Christ is your Shepherd, he feedeth you in green Pastures, he hath laid down his life for his Sheep, and will you not love such a Shepherd? he is your Captain who hath conquered all your Enemies for you, and leadeth you on to take the spoils, and will you not love such a leader? He is your Prophet, who teacheth you the most excellent things that ever were taught, the highest mysteries, the most glorious truths, which are of the greatest concernment to know and believe; and he teacheth you in the most excellent way by his Word and Spirit, opening your understandings as well as his truths, giving you light and an eye to discern this light; and will you not love such a teacher? He is your High-Priest who hath made satisfaction for you, and withall maketh intercession for you, to reconcile you unto God and his intercession is incessant and prevalent, and will you not love such an Advocate? He is your King who ruleth you most powerfully and righteously, most wisely and graciously, and will you not love such a Soveraign. He is your Benefactor the most kind and bountiful, and no gifts are comparable unto his gifts, and will you not love such a friend? He is your Brother, and if he be not a shamed to own you for his Brethren and Sisters, will it not be a shame if you should withhold from him your hearts? He is your Husband, and you are joyned to him by the Spirit and Faith in such Bonds as cannot be broken, and will not you embrace him in the arms of your dearest love? He is your Redeemer who rescued and delivered you from Sin and Sathan, from Death and Wrath: He

hath

hath redeemed you by price, the price of his blood, and hath he not then given the greatest price for your love? he hath redeemed you also by conquest, and shall he not make a conquest of your hearts? Surely you are altogether unworthy of these relations if you do not present Christ with your most endeared and choisest Affections. Thus far the Motives drawn from the consideration of what Christ is.

## SECTION XII.

THe 2d. sort of Motives to excite your Love to Christ, may be drawn from the consideration of Christs love unto true Christians. If you are Christians indeed, Christ loveth you, 1. with the Freest Love, 2. With the truest Love. 3. With the strongest Love. 4. With the surest Love.

1. Consider that Christ loveth you with the freest Love: There are many motives and attractives for your Love to Christ, but Christs love to you is most free; nothing in your selves to draw and engage his love, except deformity and enmity to him, except filthiness which he loatheth, and wickedness which his soul hateth be motives. There is no man in the world that loveth you but he findeth or fancyeth some loveliness in you, something to be a motive to draw his love to you; witt is a motive to some, wealth to others, beauty to some, strength to others, near Relation to some, dear love to others, liberality to some, service to others; greatness to some, goodness to others; likeness whether it be in good or evil is a motive to the love of the most; But Christs first love to you, is altogether free, that which is a motive to men and induceth their

love to you is no motive to incline the Love of Christ: the sin which you brought into the world with you, and the many sins which since you came into the world have been committed by you, are enough to shut out all motives of Love in Christ, unto whom all sin is so odious and abominable. Whatever motive induced Christ to love you, it was not drawn from your selves, but it was drawn from his own bowels. And will not this free love of Christ incline you to love him? Doth he love you most freely, and will not you love him most dearly? Did Christ love you without any motive to draw his love? and will not you love Christ in whom there are so many motives to draw your love? Did Christ begin to love, and will not you make a return? Did Christ love you under your deformity and will not you love him, in whom there is such perfect beauty? If you now have any spiritual beauty, it is through the comeliness which Christ hath put upon you, but Christs first love was free, which is matter of the greatest admiration, and should be a motive unto the greatest affection.

2. Consider that Christ loveth you with the truest love: There is little true love in the world, you have many that truly hate you, few that truly love you: and there is much dissimulation in the pretended love and affection of some; all that flatter you do not truly love you; love in shew and outward appearance, in good words and fair speeches is common, but love indeed & in truth, that evidenceth it self in real offices of Love, where there is the greatest need, this is rarely to be found. *Job* complaineth. *Job* 6. 15, 16, 17 *My brethren have dealt deceitfully like a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away: which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid: what time they wax warm they vanish, when it is hot they are consumed out of their place.* In the pro-

sperity of *Job* he had many friends, and their love and friendship did seem to have some strength and consistency, like the ice upon the brook; but when heat of trouble and calamity came upon *Job*, then the love of his friends did melt and vanish away like ice and snow before the warm beams of the Sun: the love of the most is selfish, for their own ends, and therefore when their love is not like to be beneficial, but rather create trouble and prejudice to themselves. it cometh to nothing. True Christianity doth teach another kind of Love, and those that are powerfully Religious have a true love, which is ready to shew it self most in an adverse estate. But none do or can love you with such a true love as Jesus *Christ*; there is no flattery or dissimulation in his Love, his love is not in the least counterfeit, it is not in the least selfish and for his own ends; he doth not love you to receive good from you, but that he might do good unto you; he loveth you not onely in prosperity, but chiefly he doth evidence his love in affliction and adversity. He is a present help in the time of trouble, & then doth give the most tender demonstrations of his love: he is touched with the feeling of your infirmities when you are tempted, & sympathized with you in your sorrows when you are afflicted; he shewes his Love in visiting you under your troubles, in supporting you, in relieving you, and in delivering you, Oh! what love should you have unto the Lord Jesus Christ, who loveth you with such a true love.

3. Consider that Christ loveth you with the strongest Love. His love is more strong than death, more ardent than the Fire, which hath a most vehement Flame. The strength of Christs love to you doth shew it self in the activity of his Love, in his doing for you: and this will appear in three things, 1. In what he hath done for

you, 2. In what he is doing for you. 3. In what he will do for you.

1. The strength and activity of Christs Love to you, doth shew it self in what Christ hath done for you I shall briefly name some particulars. 1. It was the strong love of Christ which brought him down from heaven for you, to assume your Nature, what manner of love was this that God should become man? that Spirit should become flesh, that he who made the world should be born of a mean Virgin, and all for your sakes! 2 It was the love of Christ which made him to fulfill all righteousness for you; He yielded perfect obedience to the Law both Moral and Ceremonial, that you might have the benefit of it. It was the love of Christ which made him submit himself to the temptations of the Devil for you, that he, suffering being tempted, might be able to succour you when you are tempted. 4. It was the love of Christ which made him endure the contradictions of sinners for you; he bore many affronts, contumelies, envyings and blasphemies of wicked men, that he might give you an example how to carry your selves under the like circumstances, 5 It was the Love of Christ which made him lay down his Life for you, *Joh.* 15. 13 14. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend: ye are my friends.* That such a person as Christ, so excellent, so innocent, should undergo death, and such a death as that of the Cross, so disgraceful, so painful: that he should submit to such Ignominy, and endure such Agony, such tearings in his flesh, such pressures in his spirit, and that with such resolution and willingness, with such submission and patience, and that for such as you, although now his friends, yet whilst in a state of Nature strangers and enemies; here was Love stronger than death! Oh the

height

height! Oh the depth of this Love! There are ſuch dimentions in this love of Chriſt, as the longeſt line of your moſt extended thoughts and imaginations can never be able to reach and meaſure. 6. It was the love of Chriſt which raiſed him again from the dead for you, *Rom.* 4. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification.* 7. It was the Love of Chriſt which carryed him up from earth to heaven, where he was before for you, *Joh.* 16 7. *Nevertheleſs I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you.*

2. The ſtrength and activity of Chriſts Love to you doth ſhew it ſelf in what he is doing for you. 1. He is interceding for you at the right hand of God; *Rom.* 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* It is through Love that Chriſt doth plead for you in Heaven, that your perſons may be accepted, your ſins pardoned, your prayers anſwered, and that the Holy Ghoſt may be ſent down to you to teach ſanctifie and comfort you. 2. He is preparing a place for you, *Joh.* 14. 2. *In my fathers houſe there are many Manſions, if it were not ſo I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you.* It is through love that Chriſt as your forerunner is for you entred into the glorious Palace that is above, to take poſſeſſion of it for you, and to prepare places there for your reception.

3. The ſtrength and activity of Chriſts love to you doth ſhew it ſelf in what he will do for you. 1. He will keep you in his hand that none ſhall pluck you thence, *Joh* 10. 28. *They ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any man pluck them out of my hand.* Becauſe you are received into the arms of his love, therefore you ſhall be kept by

the hand of his power, and therefore you shall neve
either finally or totally fall away. 2. Christ will mak
all things work together for your good, *Rom* 8.28 *An*
*we know that All things work together for good to them*
*that love God.* Christ hath an endeared love to all yo
that love God, your love being the fruit of his: and
when Men and Devils conspire together to do you
mischief, Christs love will turn it unto your spiritual ad-
vantage 3. Christ will stand by you in trouble and a
death, *John* 14.18. *I will not leave you comfortless, I will*
*come unto you.* When affliction doth arise, especially if it
be for his sake, and you are bereaved of all outward
comforts, Christ will not leave you comfortless, when
friends fail, and flesh fails, and heart fail, yea and life
fails, Christ will not fail, but will stand by and
strengthen you, and be a light to you in your darkest
hours, a stay to your Spirits when they are ready to
sink within you. 4. After death Christ will take care of
your Souls, he will not suffer them to wander they
know not whither, he will not suffer the Devil to seize
on them as his prey, but he will send his Angels to con-
duct & convey them into the heavenly paradise, that
where he is there they may be also, *Luk.*16 22. *And it*
*came to passe that Beggar died and was carryed by the Angels*
*into* Abrahams *bosom* 2. *Cor.* 5.8 *We are confident, I say, and*
*willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the*
*Lord.* 5. Christ will raise up your Bodies at the last day,
if your Bodies should be consumed by Fire or drowned
in the Water, or rot in the Earth whatever becometh of
them, the Lord Jesus at his second glorious appearance
will find them and raise them, and transform them in-
to the likeness of his most glorious body, *John* 6.40.
*And this is the Fathers will which hath sent me, that every*
*one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have Everla-*
*sting*

*lasting Life; and I will raise him up at the last day*, Phillip. 3. 20. 21. *For our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body.* 6. Christ will send forth his Angels to gather you into the society of the Elect that have lived in all Ages and all Parts of the World, and to convey you into his presence, to meet him in the Air when he cometh to Judge the World, *Matth.* 24. 31. *And he shall send his Angels with a great sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven unto the other,* 1 Thess. 4. 16. 17 *For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air.* 7. Christ will own you, and crown you, and admit you into the Kingdom of Heaven, which he hath prepared for you. Math 25. 34. *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdome prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.* Here is strong and active love indeed! and shall not the consideration of this love of Christ raise and lighten your love unto him? shall it not provoke and excite you unto activity of love, unto the lively and most vigorous exercise thereof? hath Christ united himself to your nature? and shall not your Hearts be united to his Person? hath he fulfilled all Righteousness for you? and will not you fulfill his command of Love? hath he endured such temptations contradictions & sufferings upon your account & given himself to dye for you? and will not you give your Hearts unto him? hath he risen from the dead, and

ascen-

ascended into Heaven for you? and will not your Affections arise from the earth and ascend into Heaven where Jesus Christ is? Doth he plead in Heaven with the Father for you? and will not you hearken to his pleadings, by his Word and Spirit with you for your love? is he preparing a glorious Mansion for you in his Fathers house? and will not you prepare a place for him and entertain him in the inner room of your chiefest Affections? doth and will he keep you in his hand and will not you embrace him in your bosoms? will he make all things work together for your good? & will not your Affections work towards him? will he stand by you in trouble and at death, & will not this put life into your love? will he send his Angels to convey your souls into his presence, when separated from our bodies? and shall not your hearts get to him and lodge with him before? will he raise up your Bodies at the last day? and will not the hopes of this raise up your Affections? shall you be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the Air, and will Christ there own & crown you? and will not the believing fore-thoughts of this ravish your hearts with love to Christ, and transport you with unspeakable joy? the strength of Christs love to you methinks should engage your love for him, not only in the truth of it, but also in the strength of it.

4. Consider that Christ loveth you with the surest love. Some Friends may love you a while with some kind of strength and ardency, but such differences may arise between you, as shall soon weaken and cool their love, and of Friends they shall prove strangers, yea become Enemies unto you: or if their love doth abide it is not sure, because they may not abide; if their Love dye not whilst they live, they may soon dye, and then their love is at an end: but the love of the Lord Jesus

Jesus Christ unto you is the most sure love: if he begin to love you he will continue to love you; if he love you once he will love you to the end or rather without end: the love of Christ is not subject to mutations and changes like unto ours; if you slag in your love, he will not fail in his love, and though you offend him, he is not irreconcileable; he may indeed upon unkindness on your side withdraw the manifestations of his love for a while, but he will never wholly remove his love from you, the love of Christ admits of no changing, knows no ending. Christians, what motives can you find in any person, or any thing in the world which you have seen, comparable to those which you have in this Lord Jesus Christ, though you have never seen him: He is a Person most amiable in himself, his greatness, his holiness, his wisdome, his faithfulness, his fulness, his kindness do make him shine with an admirable lustre: his Relation to the Father, and the love which the Father doth bear to him, his Relation unto you, being your Shepherd, your Captain, your Teacher, your Advocate, your Soveraign, your Benefactor, your brother, your Husband, your Redeemer, all these do commend him to your love, but when matchlesse beauty and loveliness do meet in a person that doth bear matchless love to you, when this most amiable Lord Jesus doth love you with such a free love, such a cordial love, such a strong and active love, such a sure and constant love; when his love is incomparable, surpassing all other love, and incomprehensible surpassing all knowledge. O with what activity ardour and constancy, should you love so suitable an object.

SECT.

## SECTION XIII.

THe third sort of motives to excite your love unto Christ, may be drawn from the consideration of Christs Benefits. If you are true Christians you have 1. Spiritual light from Christ. 2. Spiritual Life from him. 3. The Pardon of sin from him. 4. The Robes of Righteousness from him. 5 The Peace of Conscience from him. 6. The Joyes of the Holy Ghost from him. 7. The Riches of Grace from him. 8. The Dignity of Children from him. 9. The Spirit of Prayer from him. 10. Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, with the first Fruits and fore-tastes of it from him here, and shall be put into the possession of it by him hereafter.

1. You have spiritual light from Christ; Christ is the Sun from whom all the beams of this light do come: time was when you were not only in the dark, but darkness; but Jesus Christ did enlighten you, *Eph.* 5. 8. *For ye were sometimes darkness; but now are yee light in the Lord; walk as Children of the light*: it is Christ that hath turned you from darkness to light, that hath translated you out of darkness into his marvellous light, he hath caused a marvellous light to shine into your minds, whereby he hath discovered to you the wonderful things of the Law, that thereby you might discern the odious nature of Sin: and whereby he hath discovered to you the wonderful mysteries of the Gospel, that thereby you might discern the excellency of Gospel-priviledges, & the exceeding riches of Gods Grace and Kindness through Jesus Christ. Christ hath opened your eyes to see the chiefest evil, that you might be delivered from it, and the chiefest good and happiness that you might attain unto it. And doth not this light which you have from Christ call for your love? If the man that was born

blind

blind, and was cured of his naturall darkneſs by Chriſt, did love Chriſt for this favour, ſo as boldly to plead for him before the Phariſees, though he were for it caſt out of the Synagogues, as you may read in *John* 9. How much more reaſon have you to love Chriſt, who hath cured you of your Spiritual darkneſs; which had it continued, you would have gone blindfold to Hell, where there is blackneſs of darkneſs for ever?

2. You have Spiritual life from Chriſt: you were ſpiritually dead, and Chriſt hath quickned you, *Eph.* 2 1. *You hath he quickned who were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes.* We read that Chriſt raiſed *Lazarus* from the dead after he had been buried four dayes, *John* 11. *Lazarus* did love Chriſt before, but no doubt this Reſurrection of him ſo wonderfully did endear his love to Chriſt exceedingly: and ſhall not Chriſts raiſing you up from your Spiritual death, raiſe your hearts unto a great height of love to Chriſt! you will greatly love one that is inſtrumental to ſave your natural life, when in great hazard & danger, eſpecially if he ſhould do it by venturing his own; and will you not greatly love Chriſt who hath given you ſpiritual life, which is far more excellent than the life of nature; and when he dyed that you might live, and when if you had not received this ſpiritual life from him, you could not have eſcaped eternal death.

3. You have the pardon of ſin from Chriſt: this Chriſt hath purchaſed for you, and the purchaſe hath coſt him dear, even his blood which was of more worth than the treaſures, were there ſo many, of ten thouſand worlds; this Chriſt hath ſued out for you by his interceſſion at the right hand of God. Whilſt you were under the guilt of ſin you were bound over by the Juſtice of God to ſuffer the vengeance of eternal Fire; but

but being pardoned your obligation to future punishment is taken off, and you are no more lyable to wrath to come, and the vengeance of Hell, than if you had never sinn'd. And will you not love the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath procured for you so great a privi-ledge? we read of one that had much forgiven her, & she loved much, *Luk.* 7.47. and have not you had much forgiven? have not your sins been very numerous, and very heinous? and hath Christ obtained the pardon of them all? and will not you love Christ much?

4. You have the Robes of Righteousness from Christ: you are born naked of Original Righteousness, and you could not work out any actual Righteousness for your selves that might cover your nakedness, whatever you wrought your selves it was rags that could not cover you, and it was filthy rags which did pollute and defile you. Christ hath given you the Robes of his perfect Righteousness to cover and adorn you withall, and therein you are accepted as perfectly Righteous in the sight of God. O how should we love the Lord Jesus for this Garment; if your Bodies were naked & one should give you clothes to cover you, especially if they were rich clothes, you would love such a person; and will you not love the Lord Jesus Christ who hath given you a garment to cover your souls, & that a very rich one, even the Robes of his most pure & unspotted Righteousness which by Faith is put upon you?

5. You have peace of Conscience from Christ. This is that peace which the Scripture telleth us *passeth all understanding, Phil.* 4. 7. It passeth all understanding to know the worth of it: such as have this peace would not leave it upon any account, they would part with Estate or Liberty, or Life rather than part with their peace: and those which have it not, but now do slight

and

and neglect it, yet if they be awakened by the sides of the Grave, and when they are come to the confines of Eternity, then they would value this peace, and would give all the world (were it at their dispose) for it. This Jewel of peace you have from Jesus Christ, he hath purchased it for you, the chastisement of your peace was upon him, and he hath promised and bequeathed it in his last will and Testament unto you, *John* 14, 27. *My Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you.* In his reconciling you unto God he hath laid a foundation for this peace in all you that are true believers; and if he have moreover spoken peace to you in giving you well-grounded evidences of your Reconciliation; if after railing a Storm, he hath sent a calm into your Spirits, & given a sweet serenity unto you in the testimony of his Spirit to and with your Spirits that your peace is made with God, O how should this draw forth your love to Christ?

6. You have the Joyes of the Holy Ghost from Christ. We read of the *Thessalonians*, that they *received the Word in much Affliction, with Joy of the Holy Ghost*, 1 *Thess.* 1. 6. Such are those Joys spoken of in the Text, which are *unspeakable and full of Glory.* These are not carnal joys but Spiritual, which are of a higher nature and sweeter relish, that have a higher object, and are the beginnings of Eternal Joys; if you have these joys in any measure, you have them from Christ; he sends the Holy Ghost from heaven to be your comforter, to fill your Hearts with spiritual joys, and shall not your hearts then be filled with love to the Lord Jesus who is the Author of them?

7. You have the riches of Grace from Christ: if any of you were poor and ready to starve with hunger and cold, and a rich man should give or send to you a chest

full of Gold and Silver, or a Cabinet full of Jewels worth many thousand pounds; would you not love such a Benefactor? the Lord Jesus hath given you the riches of Grace, the least measure of which is really of more worth than the vastest treasures of Gold, Silver & precious Stones, that ever was gathered together and heaped up by the most wealthy man that ever lived upon the face of the earth; and will you not love Jesus Christ who hath given you these inestimable riches?

8. You have the dignity of Children from Christ; 1 *John* 3.1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God*; this priviledge of Adoption is bestowed upon you, not only by the Father, but also by the Son; *John* 1.12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* We read of some raised from the dust, and lifted up from the dunghill to sit with Princes, *Psal.* 113.7.8. It is a far higher advancement to be lifted up from the dunghill of sin, and of slaves to lusts, and Children of the Devil, to be made the Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty. This honour have all the Saints, and it is Jesus Christ who hath conferred this honour upon you; and will not this endear your love to Christ?

8. You have the Spirit of Prayer from Christ; being Sons, the Spirit of the Son is sent down into your Hearts whereby you are enabled to say *Abba Father*, *Gal.* 4.6. through Christ you have access unto God by the Spirit, *Eph* 2.18 It is the Spirit of Christ which helpeth your infirmities in Prayer, that formeth your Petitions, that enableth you to Pray with Faith & Life, and Fervour. Through Christ you have free Admittance to the Throne of Grace, through Christ you have Assistance by his Spirit to pray in prayer; through Christ

you

you have Audience, and Gracious Returns; O how are you beholden unto Christ? and how should you love him?

10. You have a Title to the Kingdome of Heaven from Christ. Through Christ you are Children, and through Christ you are heirs. It is Christ that gives the first Fruits of the heavenly *Canaan*, the earnest of the future Treasure and Inheritance which he hath promised, & the foretastes sometimes of those Soul ravishing pleasures, which the Saints shall have in Fulnes, and to Eternity, when they are received up into Glory. And it is Christ that hereafter will give Possession unto you, of the Kingdome of Heaven. At the day of his glorious Appearance, after he hath owned you before the whole World of Angels and Men, and honoured you to be his Assessors in his judging and condemning the wicked; he will receive you with Acclamations of Joy and Triumph, into the Glorious Pallace of the New *Jerusalem*, where you shall have the beatifical Vision and Fruition of the Glorious *Jehovah*, and be made partakers of such Glorious Felicity as hath not now entred into your hearts to conceive. And will not the consideration of all this set your hearts on fire with love to Christ? Christians, is there any Person like to Christs Person? is there any love like to Christs love? are there any benefits like to Christs benefits? No, no, he is incomparable in all; methinks then you should by this time feel your love to Christ like Fire to burn within with a vehement flame? or methinks your love to Christ should be like water, I mean the waters of the Sanctuary spoken of *Ezek.* 47. 3, 4, 5. which at entrance were but to the Ankles, a little further were up to the Loyns, a little further a deep River over the head, where a man might swim; methinks you should

perceive an encreasing of your love under these various motives, if your love were more shallow at first, me thinks by this time it should have got some depth: when such Winds do blow, the waters should flow and over flow, methinks your love to Christ should be raised unto a high tide, and run with a strong Stream. Thus for the motives drawn from the consideration of Christ Benefits, all which are so many Orators for your love

## SECTION XIV.

THe fourth and last sort of Motives to excite your love to Christ may be drawn from the consideration of that love which Christians have or should have unto him; and here consider, 1. The Duty, 2. The Priviledge. 3. The Honour. 4. The Wisdom, 5. The Excellency. 6. The Necessity. 7. The Usefulness. 8. The Delightfulness. 9. The Attainableness of this love to Jesus Christ.

1. Consider it is your duty to love Christ: if it be your Duty to have a Natural Affection unto Parents and Children, it is much more your duty to have spiritual affections unto Christ: If it be your duty to have conjugal affection unto your earthly Husband and Wife; it is a greater duty to have conjugal love unto this your heavenly Husband. If it be your Duty to love brethren Sisters and Kindred, that love you, it is a greater Duty to love Jesus Christ, who loves you above all Relations: if it be your Duty to love your Enemies, it is much more your Duty to love Christ who is your best Friend. It is the will of your Heavenly Father that you should love Christ: the Devil would have you hate him, but God would have you love him, and whether it be most reason

reason that you should obey the Will of God or the Will of the Devil, judge ye. It is the Will of Christ that you should love him; the will of the flesh is against this love, but whose will ought you to comply with-all? you are not debters to the Flesh that you should obey its command, neither are you debters to any Creatures to give them your choicest affections, but you are debtors unto Christ to give him your chief love Christ hath most right to your love, and will you not give to Christ his due? if you are bound to give men their due, are you not much more bound to give unto Christ his due? Christs due is your best, and have you any thing better than your hearts to present him with-all? will Christ accept of any thing at your hands, should you withhold from him your hearts? had you thousands of Rams, and ten thousand Rivers of Oyle to offer to him, had you all the treasures of the earth at your dispose, and should lay it down all at his feet, it would be all slighted and disregarded by him, if you give away your hearts from him.

2. Consider it is your Priviledge that you may love Christ, that Christ will give you leave to do it, & kindly accept of your Love. Should Beggars fall in love with Princes in order to the marriage Union, both their Persons and Love would be rejected with scorn, anger & disdain: There is a far greater distance between you and Jesus Christ, than there is between the highest Prince and the meanest Beggar; and yet the Lord Jesus Christ doth give you leave to love him with a spiritually conjugal love, in order to the neerest spiritual Union and Conjunction: and notwithstanding his greatness and your meaness, he is not ashamed to give entertainment unto your Love; although you are so mean as Creatures, and have been so vile as Sinners, yet he doht not

scorn and disdain you, but both Persons and Love may find ready acceptance with him. It is your duty to love Christ because he commands you, and it is your *Priviledge* that you may love Christ, because he allows you to do it.

3. Consider it is your Honour to Love Christ. The real Honour of any is not the Noble Blood which runs in their veins the high lineage from whence they are descended, the great Titles with which they are invested, or the most eminent earthly dignities unto which they are advanced: The Heathen could say, *Et Genus & Proavos, & quæ non fecimus ipsi vix ea nostra voco*; our stock and noble Ancestors, and what we have not done or deserved our selves, we can hardly call our own. And *Virtus sola & unica Nobilitas*: Vertue is the only true Nobility. And the Scripture telleth us, that *the vilest Men are exalted*, *Psal.* 12. 8. and *that the most high ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of Men*, Dan. 4. 17. Princes and Nobles by their Vices and Wickednesses may render themselves more vile then the earth under their Feet, more base than the mire in the Streets. The Word of God accounteth only them to be truly honourable, that are truly Gracious; and this Grace of Love to Jesus Christ doth put a great Honour and lustre upon all those that have it. There is no greater and higher object for your love than the Lord Jesus Christ, a person of so great eminency and excellency: the Love of Christ doth enoble the heart, and none in the world have such truely great and generous Souls, as those who have the greatest love to him. According to the Spirit, so is the Man, either, Base or honourable; and according to the chief love, so is the Spirit; if your Heart do chiefly love any inferiour things, as all sub-

lunary

lunary things are, hereby you are debased and dishonoured: if your Heart chiefly love Christ who is a superior good and superlatively amiable, hereby you are dignified and become truly honourable. We read of Hope (that is the Grace of Hope) that *it maketh not ashamed, Rom.* 5.5. And the same may be said of this Grace of Love to Jesus Christ, is maketh not ashamed. The most in the World do love those things which one time or other will make them ashamed; the covetous will be ashamed of their love of Riches, and the voluptuous will be ashamed of their Love of Pleasures, and the Ambitious will be ashamed of their love of Honours; disappointment of Happiness and true contentment will make all ashamed of their inordinate Creature-love, especially when they come to reap the bitter Fruit of their Sin in their everlasting punishment. *Rom.* 16.21. *What Fruit had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed, for the end of those things is Death.* But the love of Christ maketh not ashamed, it is no matter of dishonor and therefore neither is nor will be matter of shame for any to love Jesus Christ with the greatest Strength and Ardency: if the wicked do despise and scorn Gods people, upon the account of this love, their scorns are their reall glory, as on the contrary their esteem of any upon the account of sin, is a reall shame and dishonour.

4. Consider, It is your Wisdom to love Christ. *Deut.* 4.6 *Keep therefore and do them, for this is your Wisdom and Understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear these Statutes, and say surely this great Nation is a Wise and Understanding People.* None have such Wisdom and Understanding as those who have and keep this Statute and Commandment to love the Lord Jesus Christ, *Psal.* 111.10. *The fear of the*

*Lord is the beginning of Wisdom, a good Understanding have all they that do his Commandments.* The fear of the Lord and the love of Christ are alwayes in conjunction, or rather the former doth include the latter; this is the beginning and chief part of Wisdom, and those have the greatest understandings, who have the strongest affections to the Lord Jesus Christ. The love of Christ is the most reasonable and therefore the most wise love. That love is most reasonable, which is chiefly carryed forth towards that object which is most suitable and really most Amiable; none so suitable and amiable an object as the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears in what hath been already said concerning Christs Person, Christs Love, and Christs Benefits. Such as love other persons or things with a chief love, they are mistaken in the objects of their love, they apprehend more excellency and desirableness in them, than really is in them, and so their love is a foolish love and unreasonable, there being nothing really worthy of it, nothing really amiable in the chief place beneath and besides Christ. Such as make choice of Christ for the object of their chief love, they make the wisest choice, there are really those excellencies in him which they apprehend, and beyond what they can possibly apprehend and conceive. They are fools that are slow of heart to love Christ, and they are most wise that are most forward unto this love. It is your Wisdom to love Christ chiefly, and to love Christ ardently, such Wisdom as will make your faces shine in the eyes of good men, and which will put a lustre upon your Spirits in the eyes of God? True Wisdom doth not consist in the invention of curious and quaint Notions, in the framing sound and rational Deductions, in uttering the sense of the mind in neat and florid expressions: but the chief Wis-

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dom doth lie in the right placing of Affections, & none have attained so high a pitch of true Spiritual Wisdom, as those that have attained the highest pitch of love to Jesus Christ. It is matter of great wonder, when there is the greatest reason and the strongest arguments for the love of Christ, that Men of the greatest Parts and learning, who have heard of Christ, do not readily fall in love with him, and attain higher degrees of this love, than others of a more inferior capacity: But the Scripture must be fulfilled, *Math.* 11.25. *I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.* Such of you as are but Babes in worldly Wisdom and humane learning, as have but mean natural parts, and no improvement by education, yet if you love the Lord Jesus Christ above all persons and things in the World, you are far more Wise than the greatest Schollars that are without this love.

5. Consider the excellency of this Love unto Jesus Christ; as the knowledge of Christ is the most excellent knowledge, *Phillipians* 3. 8. *Yea doubtless I count all things but loss, for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*: So the Love of Christ is the most excellent love. It is a love of the most excellent object, the Lord Jesus who is so excellent; it is a love of the most excellent original, it cometh down from Heaven, it is wrought by the Spirit of God: it is a love that renders them most excellent that have it. The wicked that are without this love, are like dross: the Righteous that have it are like Gold; the wicked that hate Christ, are like dirt; the Righteous that love him are like Jewels; other loves do darken and defile, the love of Christ doth brighten the Spirit and renders Men truly illustrious, and the excellent of the earth.

6. Consider the Necessity of this love unto Jesus Christ.

1. The love of Christ is universally necessary: some of you have need to do this thing, and others of you have need to do that; but all of you have the greatest need to love Christ; some of you have need of this Friend, and to love him, that you may keep him, and others of you have need of another Friend, one Friend, cannot serve the necessities of all; but all of you have need of Christ for your Friend: he is the only Friend that can serve all your necessities, and you have need to love him above all Friends; it is necessary that you who are poor should love Christ, who have but few or no Friends; and it is necessary that you who are rich should love Christ who have many Friends; Christ being a Friend instead of all to them that have none, and better than all to them that have the most.

2. The love of *Christ* is absolutely and indispensably necessary; it is not necessary that you should climb up into a high seat of dignity and honour; but it is absolutely necessary that your Affections should climb up and ascend to Jesus Christ who is above; it is not necessary that you should abound in wealth, that you should have full bags, and full coffers, and much riches in your houses, but it is absolutely necessary that you should have riches of this Grace of love to Jesus Christ in your Hearts. Food is not so necessary to satisfie your hunger, clothes are not so necessary to cover your nakedness, houses are not so necessary to shelter you from the injury of the Weather; the most needful thing is not so necessary to your bodies, as this love to Jesus Christ is necessary to your Souls. You may be poor and in the lowest condition here on Earth, & yet be truly happy whilst you live, and Eternally happy in

in the other world, if you have this love, to Jesus Christ; but without this love whatever your Riches, and Honours, and Friends, your earthly delights and enjoyments be though never so desirable, never so plentiful, yet you are miserable, and shall be, miserable. You may love other Persons and things in the world subordinately, but you must love Jesus Christ chiefly, otherwise you are under the curse both of the Law & Gospel, and you cannot escape the vengeance of Hell.

7. Consider the Usefulness of this love unto Jesus Christ.

1. The love of Christ is useful in Prosperity to ballast the Heart, that it be not overset with the full gales of a flourishing condition: it is of use to moderate the Affections to lawful things; and it is of use to keep the Heart from unlawful and sinful loves, if Christ have not your hearts, some base and foolish lusts will have them, which will wound your Consciences with guilt, & peirce your hearts thorow with many sorrows.

2. The love of Christ is useful in Adversity, to bear up the heart from sinking and being overwhelmed with the Winds and Waves of Trouble and Affliction; it is of use to establish the Heart from being extraordinarily moved in the most stormy times: not only Faith but Love too is of a fixing nature to keep from amazing fears of evil tidings, and the greatest perils; and of a strengthning Nature to stay and support the Spirit and keep off prelling Griefs & despondencies in the darkest and most doleful days.

3. The love of Christ is useful to quicken and excite unto duty, this makes the yoke of Christ easie, and will enable you to draw cheerfully therein; this makes the burden of duty (so accounted by the most,) to be no burden in esteem; if you have much love

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unto Christ you will account duty to be your privi-ledge, and the service of Christ to be freedome, & none of his commands will be grievous, but all of them joyous unto you: if you have much love unto Christ, your hearts will be enflamed hereby with zeal for your Masters Glory, and you will never think you can do too much for him.

4. The love of Christ is useful to arm you against Temptations. If Faith be a Shield, Love to Christ is a Breast-plate against the sharpest Darts which the Devil can throw at you: love to Christ doth garrison your Hearts against this Enemy, and is a strong defence against any overtures which the Devil may make in his Temptations to draw you to sin: how can I do this evil and offend my dear Lord, will be the answer of love to repel temptations to sin, whatever alluring proffers they be accompanied withal. Temptations will have no force to prevail over you, if this love of Christ be strong within you.

5. The love of Christ is useful to fit you for the cross and the greatest sufferings which you may be called unto for the sake of Christ. If you have great love to Christ, you will be ready to suffer for Christ with patience and with chearfulness; the heaviest cross will seem light, disgrace and shame will be accounted honour, losses will be esteemed gains, pains, pleasures, or at least priviledges: prisons will seem Pallaces, & death will be accounted life. O how have some run to the stake and embraced the Flames of Fire kindled to burn them, when they have felt the fire of love to Christ burning strongly within them! thus this love is usefull in Life.

6. The love of Christ is useful at death. This love in its strength will put a beauty upon the aspect of death, which

which seems so grim and terrible unto the most. If you have much love to Christ, you will look upon death as Christs messenger sent for you to bring you out of the dark Prison of the World and the Body, and to convey you into the Mansions of Glory, where your dear Lord is, and you will not be unwilling to leave the World that you may live with Christ.

8. Consider the sweetness of this love unto Christ. If there be sweetness in the love of the Members, there is much more sweetness in the love of the head; if there be delight and comfort in the love of Christs disciples for their Masters sake, there is much more delight and comfort in the love of Christ himself the Master for his own sake; the Apostle telleth us of comfort in love, *Philip.* 2. 1. that is in the love one of another, but the consolations in the love of Christ are far exceeding; there are no such sweet motions of Heart, as those of the strong and fervent outgoings of it in its love to Christ, especially when Christ doth draw near and manifest his love unto the Soul, Christ doth rejoice in his love unto his Disciples, and they may rejoyce in their love to him, and this joy in the love of Christ is a full joy: *John* 15. 11 *These things have I spoken unto you that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full*: in the former verse Christ speaketh of his love to them, and here of his joy in them they were the objects of his joy as they were the objects of his love, and according to the measure and strength of their love to Christ, so is the fulness of their joy in Christ. *Cant.* 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister my Spouse, thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck*: they are words of Christ the Beloved, unto his Spouse the Church, expressing the ravishing delight which he found in her looks of Faith, or glances of love,

Love, and the chain of Graces which she was adorned withall. How then may your Hearts be ravished with unspeakable delight in looking upon Christs most amiable face, and in the fervent actings of your love unto him? when a glance of his Eye, a smile, a beam from his countenance doth enkindle a fire in the breast, and this fire of love to Christ doth burn and flame; O how sweet is this flame, beyond what tongue is able to express.

9 And lastly, Consider the Attainableness of this love to Christ. Bruits are not capable of this love to Christ, but you are capable: as your minds are capable of knowing him, so your hearts are capable of loving him. Others have attained this love who were as much without it, and as much averse unto it, as any of you may be. Here you are capable, hereafter if you live and dye without it, you will be utterly uncapable. You have now the means of Grace, and as of other Graces, so of this Grace of love to Christ; in the diligent use of the means you may attain thereunto. Thus I have done with the motives to excite you unto the love of Christ.

## SECTION XV.

THe second thing propounded in the Prosecution of the use of Exhortation was to give Directions, and the directions will be of two sorts. 1. How to attain this love to Christ. 2. Wherein to show this love to Christ. First, How to attain this love to Christ, and here I shall, 1. Direct you how you may attain this love to Christ in the truth of it, where you are wholly without it. 2. Direct you how to attain much of this love

love to Christ, where you have it but in a low degree and weak measure. The first directions then shall be, how you that are Graceless, and Christless, and wholly without this love to Christ, may attain this love to Christ.

1. If you would attain this love unto Jesus Christ whom you have never seen, you must get a thorow perswasion that there is such a Person as Jesus Christ, and that he is such a Person indeed, as the Scriptures have revealed him to be. The reason why Heathens and Infidels are without love to Christ is because they have never heard of him, and the reason why many nominal Christians that have heard of Christ are without love to him, is because they are not really perswaded that there is or ever was such a person as Jesus Christ in the World. If you would attain this love you must give firm assent to this Truth (which is the greatest of all, and the very pillar and foundation of the whole Christian Religion) that Christ really is, and that the History of him is no cunningly devised Fable. If you have reason to believe that there was such a Person as *Alexander* the Great, that there was such person as *Julius Cæsar*, both which lived before Christs time; you have more reason to believe that there was and is such a Person as Jesus Christ: you have only Prophane history for the former, but you have sacred history for the latter; you have only the writings of men to testifie the one, but you have the word of God in the Holy Scripture to testifie the other. You have as much reason to believe the history of the Gospel as to believe any other history, and you have more reason to believe the history of the Gospel than to believe any other history. I shall suggest one reason amongst many that might be mentioned. The History of the Gospel

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was written by unlearned Fishermen, and it was believed by as learned men as any in the world, in and near the time of their writing, which belief some of them sealed with their blood, which they would never have done had they found any reason to suspect the truth of this history, which (had there been any reason of suspition) they might easily have found out in those times when such a grand Fable as this (had it been a Fable) could not possibly have gained credit amongst wise and inquisitive men; especially when it would have been their greatest worldly Interest, the preservation of their Estates and Lives, to have disbelieved and disowned it. If, beside the Apostles, all the learned Fathers (whose Works are extant amongst us, who lived near the Apostles times, and some of whom suffered Martyrdom for Christs sake) did see reason to believe that there was such a Person as Christ, surely you have reason to believe, and no solid reason to discredit the report of him in the History of the Gospel. And when you have attained a firm assent unto this, get a full perswasion that Jesus Christ is such a person as the Scriptures do record and testifie him to be. Be perswaded of his Amiableness, his Greatness, his Holiness, his Wisdom, his Faithfulness, his Fulness, his Kindness, the Relation he stands in to the Father, his onely begotten and dearly beloved Son; the Relation he standeth in to his People, especially in his Offices of *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*, as I have set him forth in the Motives to stirre up Love; acquaint your selves with the History of his Birth so Wonderfull, of his Life so Holy, of his Works so Powerfull, of his Doctrine so Heavenly, of his Sufferings so great, of his Death so painfull, and yet so voluntary, of his Resurrection, Ascension, Session and Intercession at the right

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hand of God, so needfull for us, as you have this History upon record in the New Testament: the assent to this in your Minds, will be a preparative for the attaining of true Love to Jesus Christ in your hearts.

2. If you would attain true Love unto Jesus Christ; you must get *Conviction of Sin*, and a *sense* of your need of Christ. The prevailing love and liking of Sin is inconsistent with true love unto Jesus Christ; such as love Christ do hate Sin, and such as love sin have an Enmity against Christ: Whilest your hearts goe after your Covetousness, or your Voluptuousness, or are set upon any other Wickednesse, your hearts cannot be set upon Christ, Before you can love Christ, your hearts must be taken off from sin. Get therefore a conviction of Sin as the greatest Evil in the world. Be perswaded what an evil thing and a bitter it is; to transgress Gods Law, and thereby to affront the highest Majesty, the great King of Glory. Look into the Word and Law of God, and see what is there required, what is there forbidden, and then look back upon your Lives, or look into the Register of your Consciences, that you may find out what your sins of Omission and Commission have been. Take a view of your transgressions of the Law, and of your disobedience also unto the Gospel; and as you are guilty before God, so labour for a clear sight and deep sense of your Guilt, how you are under the curse for your Disobedience, how you are liable to ruine and eternal destruction for your sins. Look upon sin as the most mischievous thing in the world; if there be any evil in any temporal calamities which ever did befall any of the children of men, yea if there be any evil in future miseries, in the extremity and eternity of Hells Plagues and Punishments, be perswaded that there is far more evil in sin which is the cause of all, Think how

miserable you are whilest under the Guilt and Reigning power of sin, that the Worm is not so vile, that the Toad is not so full of deadly Poyson, that the filth of the Earth is not comparable unto the filth of your sins. Think how base and disingenuous you have been, how monstrously ingrateful to your Maker and Benefactor, what Traytors and Rebels you have been to your Supream King and Soveraign. Think what peril and danger continually you are in of Death and Hell, how weak the thred of Life is which ties Soul and Body together, which may be suddenly cut when you are least aware, when you are most secure; and then if you be found in a Christless state, your Souls will be conveyed immediately unto a place of remedilesse and eternal misery. Be perswaded that you are undone irrecoverably, unless the Lord Jesus Christ do help you, that you are lost for ever unless the Lord Jesus Christ do save you, that you cannot escape the dreadful Vengeance of God, but must be tormented most horridly and everlastingly, amongst the Devils and the damned in Hell, unless the Lord Jesus Christ do deliver you from the Wrath which is to come. The sight and sense of sin, your miserable condition thereby, and of your indispensable need of Christ, will make way for your Love of him. If any of you were in debt many thousand pounds unto a severe Creditor, and had not one penny to discharge it, and you were threatned by him to be thrown into Prison, where you must lie and rot and starve and die, without hopes of relief or release, except you could make payment of the debt: And if you should hear of such a Rich man that were willing and did proffer to be your Surety, and to pay all for you; surely you would have an endeared Love to such a friend and

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Benefactor: Your sins are debts beyond the vastest summe of Money that ever was ow'd or pay'd, & you are not able to pay one farthing, to give the least satisfaction unto God, unto whom you are indebted; and God is severe, and strictly just, and without full satisfaction to his Justice, he will throw you into a worse Prison than the most nasty dolesom Prison on Earth, I mean into the Prison of Hell, where you must lie without the least relief, or any hopes of release: The Lord Jesus Christ proffers to be your Surety, to pay off all for you, and to give you a full discharge; were you sensible what a Debt Sin is, and what a Prison Hell is, surely it would work your hearts unto an endeared Love of such a Friend and Surety, who alone can keep you out of this dolesome dreadfull Prison, into which without him you will certainly and may suddenly be thrown. If any of you were sick of a Death-threatning distemper, and you had made use of many Physicians, but none could do you good: and if you should hear of one Physician who could assuredly and would readily & freely cure your disease, & save your life; surely you would thankfully make use of this Physician, and his kindness would exceedingly engage your Love: Sin is the Souls sickness, you are sick unto death, Sin when it is finished will bring forth Death, not only Temporal but eternal; It is the Lord Jesus Christ only that can cure you of this deadly Sickness, that can remove your Sin, and thereby deliver you from this death of deaths, Get a sense of the dangerous sickness of Sin, and you will prize and use and love the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Physician of value in this case. If any of you were guilty of Murder, or Theft, or High Treason, or any other heinous breach of the Law of the Land, for which you were apprehended, arraigned, accused, and

condemned to be hanged or burned, or to a more tormenting Death than either; and if you should hear of a Prince at Court that had begged the Pardon of such Crimes, for such Malefactors, and had obtained, and he should send to you to signifie his willingness to do the like for you; surely you would thankfully accept of such a proffer, and would love this Prince as your life, who should thus preserve you from Death: You are all Guilty of high Treason and Rebellion against the King of Heaven, in your breach of his Law, and you are condemned by this Law, not to be hanged for it, or be beaded, but to be burned for it, to be burn'd in the Fire of Hell, which is unquenchable; The Lord Jesus Christ is the Prince of Glory, a Friend in the Court of Heaven, who hath procured a Pardon for many such malefactors, and sendeth to you to signifie his willingness to procure your Pardon, if you will make use of him: Surely, if you have a sense of your Crime and Danger, you will apply your selves unto Christ to save you, & you will not withhold your Love from such a one as should shew you such unparalleled Favour.

3. If you would attain true Love unto Christ, you must get an Interest in Christ, you must lay hold on Christ by Faith, that you may be united to him, and related to him; It is Faith that works Love, to them that believe Christ is precious, but by Unbelievers he is sleighted, and cannot be beloved; without Union to Christ you will have no affection to Christ: the foundation of Love is layed in the Relation to the beloved, and this Union to and Interest in Christ, it is only by Faith; if then you would embrace Christ in the arms of your Love, you must first lay hold on Christ, and receive him by the hand of Faith. Whatever Motives and Attractives of Love there be in Jesus Christ, they will

will be none to you without this Interest and Relation: Christ is a Person most beautifull, most lovely and amiable, but he will not be so in your eyes, so long as you are without the eye of Faith; he is great and powerfull, but so much the worse for you, because without Interest in him, his power is engaged against you: he is pure and holy, and whilest in your sins you are therefore the more odious in his sight; he is wise and knoweth all things, therefore is privy to all your sins: he is most true, and therefore will fulfill his threatnings against such as go on still in their trespasses: he is full, but you without interest in his Person have no share in his fulness; he is kind, but it is to those that are related to him, but what is this to you that are Unbelievers? he is a Shepheard to his Sheep, bnt you are Goats; he is a Captain to his Souldiers, but you are Enemies; he is a Teacher to his Disciples, but you are the Devils Scholars; he is a Gracious Soveraign, but it is to his Subjects, you are rebells: He is a Priest to his People, having made satisfaction and doth make intercession for them: but you trample his blood under his feet. He is a Friend and Benefactor to his People, but you are Strangers, he is a Brother, and a Husband to his People, but you stand in none of these Relations; he is a Redeemer to his People but you are Slaves and Captives.

The light which he gives is most sweet, but you are darkness: the life which he imparts is most excellent, but yon are dead in sins and trespasses; he gives pardon of sin, but you are under guilt: he gives Peace of Conscience, but your Consciences are still wounded and feared: he gives the Joyes of the Holy Ghost, but you are in danger of eternal woes; the Robes of his Righteousness are most Rich, but you are naked: the

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Riches of his Grace are inestimable, but you are still poor; the dignity of being made the Sons of God is most admirable, but you are Children of the Devil; he gives accesse unto God in Prayer, but you are still at a distance; he gives a Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, but if you continue in your present state, you will be shut at last out of the Pallace which is above, and be thrust down into the Prison of Hell which is below. What then are all these motives to draw forth love to Christ unto you, that have no interest in Christ? it is Union and Relation unto Christ, and interest in him by Faith, which puts life into these motives that they may indeed attract love; O then be perswaded without further delay to endeavour after this interest in Christ: you must have it, or you are lost irrecoverably, you will be miserable eternally; and you may attain this interest, others have attained it, as mean, and as vile as your selves; and you are called unto Christ, O be perswaded then to come unto Christ, and joyn your selves by Faith unto him, that you may have interest in Christ and in all his Benefits. If you ask me what this Faith is that gives an interest in Christ, what it is to believe: I answer out of *John* 1. 12, that it is to receive Christ. *But to as many as received him to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that Believe in his Name.* Be perswaded then to receive Christ and accept of him upon the terms of the Gospel. Receive and take hold of Christ by the hand of Faith. And that you may do this, 1. You must let go your hold of sin, if your hugg sin in your bosom, if you harbour base Lusts in your Hearts, you cannot receive and give entertainment to Christ there; you must thrust sin out, if you would let Christ in. 2. You must let go your hold on the World; I don't say you must let it go out of your hands,

hands, and throw away the estates which God hath given; except it be to part with some proportion in a way of Mercy and Charity, and except you be called to leave all rather than to forgo Christ or any of his Truths; but you must let the World go out of your Hearts, the World must not sit upon the Throne of your Hearts, that seat must be reserved for Christ, chief love and inordinate love to the world and things in the world must be taken off. 3. You must let go hold of self: your own Righteousness and all self confidences must be parted with, you must be humbled and emptied of your selves, if you would be prepared for the receiving of Jesus Christ, & receiving of that fulness which there is in him. And then, 1. Receive Jesus Christ as your High-Priest to reconcile you unto God, trusting alone in his merits & mediation. 2. Receive Jesus Christ as your Prophet to instruct & lead you in all truth by his Word and Spirit. 3 Receive Jesus Christ as your soveraign Lord & King to rule you. 4. Receive Jesus Christ as your Captain to tread down your spiritual Enemies under your feet. 5 Receive Jesus Christ in all his Relations of Shepherd, Friend, Brother, and especially in the Relation of an Husband, and joyn your selves to him, and make over your selves to him, dedicating and devoting your selves to him, and giving up your selves to be guided, guarded, provided for, and governed by him. This is to receive Christ, and this is to Believe, this gives Union and Relation, and interest in the Lord Jesus, and if you do thus joyn your selves to Christ by Faith; you will quickly feel love to Christ to spring forth, to work and act, and that vigorously; and to bring forth such fruit in the life as shall evidently shew, that love to Christ is rooted in the Heart.

4 If you would attain Truth of love to Jesus Christ;

be diligent in the use of all those means which God hath appointed for the working of it, I shall instance only in two means.

1. Be diligent in Hearing the Word preached: as Faith cometh by Hearing, so love to Christ is wrought by the same means, *Hear and your Souls shall live*, saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 55. 3. and I may say, hear that your Hearts may love, that where the Eye cannot, the Ears may affect the Heart with love to the Lord Jesus: Whilst *Lydia* was hearing *Paul* preach, her heart was opened, *Act.* 16. 14. and whilst you are hearing Ministers preach of Christ, your Hearts may be opened to receive him, and to embrace him in the arms of your dearest love, See *Act.* 11. 15. *As I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning*: whilst *Peter* was preaching and the Gentiles were hearing, the Holy Ghost was sent down from Heaven and fell upon them: and so whilst you are hearing the Word, God may give forth of his Spirit to work this Grace of love to Jesus Christ in your Hearts.

2. Be diligent and earnest in Prayer unto God for this love, confess and bewail before him your want of this love, tell him you deserve a double *Anathema*, because you do not love Christ, and withall tell him you cannot of your selves love him, that you can as easily lift up a mountain to Heaven, as lift up your hearts unto Christ; but desire that he would draw up your love to Christ by his Spirit. Beg of him that he would put out the fire of Lust, and all inordinate creature love, and that he would enkindle a fire of love in you to this most lovely Jesus, which no corruption in your Hearts may be able extinguish. And in your Prayers present your Hearts to the Lord Jesus, offer them up freely to him, and desire that he would accept of them, that he would

would take hold of them, and take possession of them and erect his Throne in them, and an Everlasting habitation for himself.

## SECTION XVI.

HAving given directions how you may attain the Truth of love to Christ where you are withhout it, I come now to give directions how you may attain much of this love to Christ, where you have it but in a low degree and weak measure. Would you attain much love to Christ?

1. Be much in Contemplation of Christ: consider often what motives there are of love in him, presse them upon your Spirits, and labour to awaken and rouze up your Hearts unto the vigorous exercise of this love. Spend time in secret retirement, and there think, and think again, of the Superlative Excellencies and Perfections which are in Christs Person, how wonderfull and matchless his love is, what heights in it that cannot be reached, what depths in it that cannot be fathomed, what other dimensions which cannot be comprehended: Meditate often of his benefits, how incomparable his love-tokens be: and whilst you are musing, you may feel the fire burning; whilst you are looking you may feel your Hearts leaping; whilst you are taking a view of him, ere you are aware, your Hearts like the Chariots of *Aminadab*, may run to him: O the raviſhments of love! the transports of Soul! which some Believers have found in their retired thoughts and views of Christ. Get often into the Mount of Divine Contemplation, and there look upwards unto Heaven, and think with your selves, .. *Yonder, Yonder above the* shin-

shining Sun is the more glorious Son of Righteousness; there at the right hand of the Throne of God, is my beloved Jesus the Son of God seated and though he be so high above me both in place & dignity, yet he thinketh upon me, and pleadeth for me, and many a gift hath he thence and sent by his Spirit conveyed unto me, and I can ask nothing of the Father in his name, but, if it be really for my good, I have it by his means. O dear Jesus, how lovely art thou in thy self, the darling of heaven! the Delight of the Father! the Admiration of Angels! O what brightness of Glory, what shining lustre art thou arrayed with! thou art clothed with most excellent Majesty and Honour, thou art girded with infinite Might and Power! the beauty of thy face is most wonderfull, the smiles of thy countenance are most sweet and delightful, and doth this lovely fair One, this fairest of ten thousand, this most excellent and altogether lovely Person bear a particular love to me? to such a vile worm as me? to such a dead Dog as me? to such an undeserving, ill-deserving, hell-deserving sinner as me? O what marvellous kindness is this! what infinite Riches of Free Grace! doth he know me by name? hath he given himself for me? and given himself to me? and shall not I give him my heart? am I written in his book, redeemed with his blood, clothed with his Righteousness, beautified with his Image? hath he put the dignity of a Child of God upon me, and prepared a place in the Fathers house for me? O wonderful! O admirable! what shall I render? what returns shall I make? had I a thousand tongues, should I not employ them all in speaking his praise? had I a thousand Hearts should I not present them all as too mean to thank offering unto him And yet am I slow, slow of Heart to love this dear

and

and sweet Jesus? awake: O my Soul! awake from thy dulness and stupidity? shake off thy sleep which glues thine eye-lids so close together, shake out the dust of the Earth which hath got into thine eyes and keeps thee from the view of thy beloved. Arise O my Soul, and lift up thy self, unfetter thy feet, unclog thy self, take the wing and mount up above the sky and visible Heavens, even to the place where the lovely and dear Jesus is. Take thy leave of the world, and all things therein. Bid farewel to the flattering honours, the deceitful Riches, the glozing *Pleasures*, that are here below: bid adieu to them, and leave them to those that place their chiefest happiness in them: if Earth hath thy body for a while, yet let it have thy heart and chiefest affections no more; come *O* my Soul ascend and soar aloft unto the Heaven of Heavens, the way unto the Holy of Holies is accessible, the vail is rent, the fore runner is entred, and thou mayest have entrance too with thy Thoughts, and Desires, and Loves, and Hopes and Joyes; there thou mayst see and view, and admire, and embrace thy dearest Lord; there thy Heart may find a fit object for its Love, even thy dearest Lord Jesus, who will not reject and despise thee, but give kind entertainment unto thy love, and withall give the fullest and sweetest returns: there thy Heart may find a room to dispose of it self, and not only a lodging like that of a wayfaring man for a night, but an habitation wherein to dwell and to take up its eternal abode: let thy Heart be thy fore-runner, that when thy body drops off from thee thou mayst know where to betake thy self and find ready entertainment there where thy Heart hath been long before. Why dost thou hang downwards O my Soul? why dost thou bend so much to the Earth and Earthly things

things? what is there here below that is not beneath thee, and altogether unworthy of thy love? how empty and vain, and thorny are these things? don't waſt thy time, weary thy ſelf for very vanity, don't prick and wound thy ſelf with theſe things any more. What aileth thee O my Soul, that thou art ſo backward to the Love of Chriſt? is it becauſe thou canſt not ſee Chriſt with the Eyes of thy Body? thou ſhalt ſee him with thoſe eyes hereafter, when he comes in his Glory, and thy body is raiſed and repaired, and fitted to bear ſuch a ſight: thou canſt not ſee the Wind, but thou heareſt its noiſe, and feeleſt its blaſts: and doſt thou not hear Chriſts voice in his Word? doſt thou not feel the breathings of his Spirit in his Ordinances. Thou art inviſible thy ſelf O my Soul, and art thou ſo drenched in fleſh, that viſible objects ſhall have more Power to draw down thy heart, than this moſt glorious object (though now inviſible) ſhall have power to draw up thy heart? doſt thou queſtion and doubt of his love to thee? and doth this damp and diſcourage thy Affection? whoſe Image is this which is engraven upon thee? is it not the Image of Chriſt? what writing is that upon thy heart? is it not Gods Law written by Chriſts Spirit? whoſe deckings and adornings haſt thou got about thee? what Beauty is this which is put upon thee? is it not Chriſts comelineſs? where hadſt thou thoſe Bracelets, that Ring, thoſe Jewels, that chain of Graces? are they not Chriſts love-tokens which he hath given thee? and yet wilt thou doubt of his love? if thou feeleſt corruption ſtrong, yet doſt thou not perceive ſome Grace? although it be weak? haſt thou not ſome love to Chriſt, although it be low? are not thy deſires chiefly after him, which evidence that thy chief love is to him? and is it ſo with any but ſuch whom

Chriſt

Chriſt doth love? doth not Chriſt love firſt? and yet wilt thou queſtion his love? baniſh then thy fears, ſilence thy doubts O my Soul, rouze up thy ſelf and climb up by the Jacobs ladder which is let down to thee from Heaven, and ſettle thy love upon Jeſus Chriſt and thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſits at the right hand of God. „ Such retired contemplations of Chriſt, and Soliloquies and pleadings with your own Souls when alone by your ſelves, will tend exceedingly to the promotion of your love unto Chriſt.

2. Would you have much love to Chriſt? Be much in Reading and Studying the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a Glaſſe in which Chriſt may be ſeen, he cannot be ſeen Face to Face in this World, this is the happineſs of the Triomphant Church in Heaven, not of the Militant Church upon the Earth; what may here be diſcerned of Chriſt, it is in the glaſs of the Scriptures and Goſpel Ordinances: this is that glaſs ſpoken of, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. *We all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image from Glory to Glory.* Chriſt is the Glory of the Lord, the brightneſs of his Fathers Glory? would you have much love to him, be often looking, veiwing and beholding of him in the glaſs of the Scriptures, by much beholding of him, you may be transformed more and more into the likeneſs of his Holineſs, and into the likeneſs of his Love, which is Glory begun. The Scriptures have the Image of Chriſt engraven upon them; the Image of the Father is upon the Son, and the Image of the Son is upon the Scriptures; there you may ſee the Picture of Chriſt, the Beauty of Chriſt, at leaſt ſome lineaments are there drawn by the hand of God, although not fully and to the life, I mean ſuch you will ſee in him when you come to behold him face to face

face in Heaven, yet his Beauty is drawn in such proportions and with such shadows as you are now capable of beholding. Would you have much love unto Christ whom you have never seen? look much upon his Picture and Image in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are Christs Love letters. In the second and third Chapters of *Revelations*, Christ doth send seven Epistles to the seven *Asian* Churches; there are many Epistles and Love-letters as it were in the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament, wherein Christ doth give most kind expressions of most endeared Love unto his People Read much and study Christs Love-letters, especially those parts of the Scriptures wherein Christ doth express most of his kindness and love. See how kindly Christ doth express himself, *Joh.*14.*v.*1,2,3,13.16.17,18, 19,20,21,22,23,27. *Chap.*15. *v.*9,13,14,15,16. *Chap.*16. *v.*7.22,24,26,27 33. *Chap.*17. *v.*9 10,11,15.20 21,22,23, 24. *Chap.*20.*v.*17. Read often and consider such places. Let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you, and his will feed and maintain your love to Christ, this is a means to have Christ dwell in your hearts, not onely by Faith, but also by most endeared Love.

3. Would you have much Love to Christ? be much in *Prayer* unto God for this Love. *Eph.*6.23. *Peace be unto the Brethren and love with Faith from God the Father.* Not onely Peace is from God, who is called the God of Peace, and Faith from God, who works it by his Almighty power: but also Love is from God, who is the God of Love; he circumciseth the heart to love himself, and to love his Son. This love of Christ is a Grace of the Spirit, which God doth freely give and powerfully work, the Beginnings of it, the Increase of it, all the Measures and Degrees of it are from him.

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If you would attain high meaſures of love to Chriſt, you muſt apply your ſelves unto God in Prayer, and therein diligently ſeek to him for it. If you would have much love to Chriſt in your hearts, you muſt be often at the Throne of Grace upon your Knees; and there humbly acknowledge, if not the want, yet the weakneſs of your love to Chriſt, bewail your Sins which do damp your Affections, and earneſtly requeſt that he would work your hearts unto a ſtrong love; be importunate in Prayer for this follow God day by day with the ſame requeſts, plead with him for it, fill your mouths with Arguments, and fill your Arguments with Faith and fervent Deſires. Tell him, whatever lovelineſſe and love there be in Chriſt, whatever attractives to draw forth your love, yet of your ſelves you are utterly unable to put forth the leaſt motion of true affection unto Chriſt. Tell him, that this love to Chriſt, though it be your duty, yet it is his Gift, that you ought to act it, but this you cannot do, unleſs he works it. Tell him how eaſily he can enkindle this Fire of Love to Chriſt in your boſoms, and blow it up into a flame. Tell him, he hath bid you to ask and you ſhall have, and whatever you ask according to his will he heareth, and that it is his will you ſhould love Chriſt not onely truely but alſo ſtrongly. Tell him, you deſire much love to Chriſt, and that theſe deſires do come from himſelf, and therefore earneſtly deſire the fulfilling of them. Tell him, if you do not love Chriſt much, you ſhall be apt to overlove the Creature, which will be diſpleaſing to him, therefore requeſt that you may have ſuch a love to Chriſt as may overpower all other love, and keep your hearts from all Inordinacy of affections to any thing beneath and beſides the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Plead how much it will be for his Glory, that you ſhould

should have much love unto Christ, that hereby you shall be enabled to honour him the more in the world. Plead how much it will be for your good; tell him, if you asked Corn and Wine and Oyl: if you asked Wealth and Honours, and Creature-delights in abundance, they might be a snare to you, and for your hurt: but a strong love to Christ is needfull and usefull, and be sure will be for your good: urge his Promise of *Circumcising the heart to love him*, and plead his Faithfulness: and if you be thus importunate in Prayer for much love to Christ, and will not be denyed, you shall not be denyed.

4. Would you have much Love to Christ, get much Faith. Faith worketh Love both to the Father and to the Son; according to the measure of your Faith, so will the measure of your Love be: Such as are without any Faith, are without any Love: such as have but a feeble faith, have but a weak love; and such as have the strongest faith, have the strongest love. The strongest faith giveth the cleerest discovery of Christs infinite Excellencies and Perfections; It is not the eye of Sense which doth discern Christ, neither is it the eye of Reason which doth discern him: whatever discoveries we have of Christ, it is by Revelation, and this is discernable onely by Faith. Faith is the Evidence of things not seen, and the unseen Christ is evident by Faith to be the most excellent Person, and the most sutable Object of love, and the more evident the Object of love is, the stronger will the love be. Moreover, Faith is not onely the Eye of the Soul to discern Christ, but also the Hand of the Soul, not onely to take hold on him, but also to receive from him of his Fulness Grace for Grace, and by consequence more of this Grace of love to him. Our Communion with Christ is by Faith; the more intimate

intimate acquaintance and fellowship we have with those whom we love, the more endeared will be our love; the strongest Faith brings us unto the greatest intimacy, fellowship and familiarity with Christ, and therefore it is a means of the strongest Love. Endeavour then to get a strong Faith, & to live daily in the powerfull exercise thereof; the more you live by Faith, the more you will dwell in the Love of Christ.

5. Would you have much Love unto Christ? labour for much of the *Spirit*; labour for much of the Light of the Spirit; There must be not onely the glass of the Scriptures, and the eye of Faith, but also the light of the Spirit, that you may have a clear discerning of this lovely Lord Jesus; Labour for much of the Operation of the Spirit: the Spirit is like Wind to blow up the Sparks of Love in your hearts into a flame. Labour for the inhabitation of the Spirit, and that the promise may be made good to you which Christ giveth to his Disciples, *Joh.* 14. 16. 17. *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

6. Would you have much love unto Christ? labour for clear Evidences of his Love unto you; the apprehensions of Christs loveliness may excite to some love, but the full well grounded perswasions of Christs love to you, will above all heighten your love to Christ. Doubts of Christs love do cause fears, and fears do contract the heart, and therefore are opposite to love, which is the expansion and enlargement of the heart; perfect love casteth out fear, the more love, the less fear, and the more doubts and fears the less love. Such as doubt much of Christs love to them, they may love

Christ truely, but they cannot love Christ strongly. You will love a less lovely person that loves you more than a more lovely person that hates you: the love of the Person beloved is a most amiable Qualification and strong attractive, yea one of the greatest Incentives & Inducements unto love. Get then a perswasion of the infinite love to you of this Infinitely lovely person, that you may be able to say with *Paul*, Gal. 2.20. *Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Look diligently into the Word of God, and find out the Characters there of those that are beloved by Christ: and then look narrowly into your selves, and see whether your face will not answer that face in the Looking-glass of the Scriptures: see whether you cannot find the lineaments of the New Man within you, whether you have not experienced a gracious change; Is there not Light where there was Darkness? Is there not Life where there was Death? Is there not Love where there was hatred? Is there not the Law of God written, where the Law of Sin did command all? Is not the Bias of your Wills and Heart God-ward, and Christ-ward, and Heaven-ward? which heretofore was onely Sin-ward and Earth-ward and Hell-ward? Pray earnestly unto God, that he would give you a full assurance, that if you are indeed effectually called, if you are indeed united and related unto Jesus Christ, you may know it, and no longer doubt thereof. In a word, seek diligently after the Manifestations of Christs Love in all the ways of his Ordinances; rest not in the outside of Ordinances, but seek after Christ in Ordinances, follow him from Sabbath to Sabbath, from Ordinance to Ordinance, and always be looking for him, and looking towards him, till he turn about and look upon you, and give you a gracious smile; seek and wait for that Manifes-

nifestation of himself which he hath promised to them that love him, *Joh.*14.21. Wait for his Mission of the Holy Ghost from Heaven, 1 *Pet.*1.12. to shed abroad the sense of his Love into your hearts, *Rom.*5.5. and if you did know assuredly and had a sense hereof given unto you by the Spirit of Christ, O the joyes which then you would have in him! O the love which then you would have to him! As your joyes would be unspeakable, so your Love would be unspeakable too; such a warmth of heart and burning of love to Christ you would feel within you, as is beyond the Rhetorick of the tongue to set forth.

7. Would you have much Love to Christ? get much hatred of Sin, and accordingly watch and pray, and strive and fight against Sin, as the worst of Evils, as that which doth so much displease your Lord. Bewail sins of daily incursion, and labour that your sins of Infirmity may be less every day than other: Take heed of sins and sudden surprize, but chiefly of designed sins, and that you comply not with any temptations unto grosser miscarriages, which like water cast upon the Fire of your love to Christ, will put out the flame, and leave onely a few unperceivable sparks in the corner of your hearts. Suffer not Sin to have any room in your hearts, or if it will abide and you cannot thrust it quite out, let it not have a quiet habitation within you; disturb sin as much as you can, wage war every day with your remaining Lusts, let no day pass over your heads without giving some blows, some thrusts & wounds to sin. Streighten the room of sin in your hearts as much as may be: the more room sin hath in your hearts, the less room Christ will have there. Particularly, take heed of inordinate love to the world, and the things in the world, the prevalency of which

love will damp your love to Christ: by how much more the world gets of your love, by so much the less Christ will have of it. A subordinate love you may have to Persons and things in the world, but let no person or thing have your chief love but only Christ; love nothing for it self with an abstracted love, but love all inferiour things with inferiour love, love all under the Lord, and in the Lord, and for the Lords sake; get all inordinate affections to the world crucified by the Cross of Christ. You must have dying affections to perishing things, if you would have a living and active love to the ever-living Jesus.

8. Would you have much love unto Christ? associate your selves most with those that have most love unto Christ: you may fetch light from their light, and you may fetch warmth from their Fire; dead coals are enkindled by the living, and your dead hearts may be enkindled with love to Christ by the warm discourse of those that have warm hearts. Be ready to speak of Christ and for Christ in any company as you have fit opportunity, and diligently watch for an Occasion; shut your ears against and reprove profane and filthy Communication; divert that which is vain and frothy, and be ready to begin and promote that which is serious & savoury, that which is gracious and may tend to your own and others edification: Study the Art, and practise it, of provoking all whom you converse withall, not unto strife and contention, but unto this love and Affection unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and whilest you are endeavouring to warm others with this Love, you may be warmed your selves.

9. And lastly, Would you have much Love unto Christ? be much in the exercise of this love, hereby it is encreased and heightned; use legs and have legs; and

and if you act this love frequently, it will hereby get strength and Activity: every day endeavour to put forth some vigorous acts of love unto Jesus Christ. In your ordinary Callings and secular Business and Employment, you may send up some looks of Love unto Jesus Christ in your ejaculations. But especially in the Duties of Gods immediate Worship, labour that your love may flow out unto Christ most vigorously. In your daily secret Devotion and Family-Worship, let love to Christ draw forth tears from your eyes, at least cause grief and sorrow in your hearts, in the acknowledgement of your sins, whereby he hath been dishonoured and displeased. Let love to Christ draw forth earnest desires after Christ, and those communications, manifestations, and consolations which he doth give to none but such as are his; let love to Christ put requests into your mouths, arguments into your requests, and fervour into your arguments in your pleadings with him at the Throne of Grace for further supplyes of his Grace, and that you may be brought into more intimacy of acquaintance with him. Every day you should express your love to Christ, especially on the Lords day, when almost the whole day is to be spent in publick & private exercises of Religious Worship in all your love to Christ should be in exercise; in your attendances upon him in Ordinances you must bring not only your Bodies before him, but present your Hearts unto him; this you should be carefull to do in publick prayer and hearing of the Word, preaching and singing Psalms; often should you endeavour in every Ordinance to lift up your hearts unto the Lord; but above all when you approach the Lords Table, all your Graces should there and then be in exercise, especially this Grace of love to Jesus Christ, your eye there should affect your heart,

when you see the representations of your crucified Lord; and think what manner of Love he did bear to you, that he should submit himself unto such a Death for you, how should this affect your hearts! And if ever, then your Love to Christ should shew it self, and act with the greatest vigour and strength.

## SECTION XVII.

HAving given Directions how to attain love to Christ in the truth and in the strength of it, I come now to the last sort of Directions wherein you should shew your love to Jesus Christ.

More generally shew your Love to Christ in your Obedience unto Christ, *Joh.* 14. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Commandements.* Be faithfull in the performance of all known Duties which Christ doth command and be carefull in the forbearance of all known sins which Christ doth forbid, let your great care be to please Christ, whoever is displeased: and your great fear be of offending Christ, whoever be offended with your strictness. Shew your love, 1. In the *Sincerity* of your Obedience. 2. In the *Willingness* of your Obedience. 3. In the *Universality* of your Obedience, 4. In the *Constancy* of your Obedience.

1. Shew your love to Christ, in the *Sincerity* of your Obedience. Hypocrites will do some things which Christ commandeth, but it is from carnal Motives and with carnal Designs: But let love to Christ be the Motive, and the Honour of Christ the end of your obedience: obey Christ because you love him, and with a design to please him: what you do, do heartily unto the Lord, and above all things desire and endeavour that what

what you doe may find acceptation with him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. *Wherefore we labour, that whether preſent or abſent we may be accepted of him.*

2. Shew your love to Chriſt in the *Willingneſs* of your Obedience: ſome will obey Chriſt, but it is with great backwardneſs, they will perform Duties, but they are burdenſome, a wearineſs, and toilſome, and the Commandements of Chriſt are grievous unto them: they are ſcarce ready unto any Duty, but when they are ſcourged unto it by the Rods of Affliction, or ſpurred and prickt forward by the goads of Conſcience; O the liſtleineſs and indiſpoſition in the moſt, unto the moſt ſpiritual part of the ſervice of Chriſt! which is an evident proof of the defect of love, either in the truth of it, or at leaſt in the meaſure and degree of it. Let your love ſhew it ſelf in the *willingneſs* of your Obedience ſerve the Lord with a willing and ready mind, with alacrity and chearfulneſs of ſpirit, looking upon the ſervice of Chriſt as your Honour, and eſteeming every Duty to be your Priviledge: If you have any conſtraints unto Obedience, let them be the conſtraints of love: as 2 *Cor.* 5.14. If you be forced to obey Chriſt, let there be no violence but the violence of love; if you be drag'd to Duty, let it be with no other cords than the cords of love; let love be the Spur and Goad to prick you forward, that you may not onely walk but run in the wayes of Chriſts commandements with an enlarged heart.

3. Shew your love to Chriſt in the *Univerſality* of your obedience. Hypocrites will perform ſome Duties which are for their turn, and will ſerve their carnal deſigns; other duties they omit and totally neglect; let your love to Chriſt diſcover it ſelf in your reſpect to all his commandments: though you cannot here attain Perfection of Obedience, yet let your Obedience be

uni-

universal: obey Christ not only in open Duties, which men are witnesses of, but also in secret Duties and spiritual Duties, which depend upon the exercise of the Mind, such as Meditation, Contemplation, Self-search, and Ejaculation, as also in the spiritual part of all Duties, which no eye can be witness unto but the eye of God; and hereby you may be distinguished from all Hypocrites in the world.

4. Shew your love to Christ in the *Constancy* of your Obedience, *Gal.* 5. 7. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?* Some Hypocrites are zealous Professors for a while, and at first setting out seem to outstrip many that are sincere, but they soon tire, and are weary not onely *in* well-doing but *of* it; they quickly stumble and fall, and not onely fall down, but fall off, not only fall back, but fall away, and turn fearfull Apostates. Shew your love to Christ not onely in setting out well, but in continuing your Christian course well unto the end of the course of your Lives; begin well, and patiently continue in well-doing: Persevere in your Obedience; *Be not weary in well-doing*, knowing that *in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not*, Gal. 6 9. And if you *be faithfull unto death*, Christ hath promised to *give you the Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. 10.

More particularly, shew your love to Christ, 1. In your learning, keeping, asserting and maintaining of Christs truths. 2. In your publick spiritedness and zeal for Christs honour and interest. 3 In your vigorous resistance and opposition of Christs Enemies. 4 In your following of Christs example. 5. In your readiness to take up and patiently to bear Christs cross. 6. In your desires after Christs presence here, a longing for Christs second appearance at the last day.

1. Shew your love to Christ in your learning, keeping,

ing, asserting and maintaining Christs Truths. 1. Learn Christs Truths, acquaint your selves by diligent reading of the Scriptures, and other books that may be a help hereunto, with all fundamental truths of the Christian Religion in the first place, and so go on and proceed further to learn those truths which are superstructory; and whatever truths you find a Foundation for in the Scriptures which are the word of Truth receive them, not only in the light of them, but also in the love of them: if the branches of truths be in your heads, and the leaves of them in your profession, and the fruit of them in your actions, let the root of them be in your Hearts. 2. Having learned the truths of Christ as they are in Jesus, let them not hang loose in your understandings but get them fastened and fixed, and close girt about the loins of your mindes; hold the truths of Christ fast, prize them above all jewels, don't part with them upon any terms, let all go, estate, liberty and life it self, rather than any of this rich treasure which Christ hath entrusted you withal. 3. Assert the truths of Christ: be not ashamed or afraid to own any truths of Christ in the most adulterous and gainsaying generation, profess your belief of Christ and of the truths of Christ, endeavour that the light of these truths may shine abroad, and cast forth such bright beams in the dark world where you live, that others may be brought hereby unto the knowledge of the Truth. 4. Endeavour to maintain Christs truths, earnestly contend for the Doctrine of Faith once delivered to the Saints, endeavour to convince gainsayers, and to defend Christs truths against those corrupt and erroneous opinions and Doctrins, which like leaven is very apt to spread and infect the mindes of men.

2. Shew your love to Christ in your publick spiritedness,

nels, and zeal for Christs honour and interest: let your affections be publick not private, narrow, contracted & centring in self; let your love be a publick and general love, Love not only Relations, but love all Christs disciples though of different perswasions and interests, because of the image of Christ; and love not only your Friends that love you, but also your Enemies that hate you, because of the command of Christ Let your desires be publick desires, desire the welfare of the universal Church, and of all Gods people throughout the world, and accordingly pray for their peace and prosperity, and endeavour as you have opportunity to promote the publick good more than your own private advantage: seek not your own things, but the things of Jesus Christ. Let your griefs be publick griefs, grieve not only for your own sins, but also for the sins of others, whereby Christ is dishonoured in the world: grieve not only for your own afflictions, but also for the afflictions of *Joseph*. *Heb.* 13. 3. *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being your selves also in the body.* You are in the same mystical body with all Christs afflicted members, and when some members suffer, the rest should suffer too, by way of sympathy. Bleeding in their wounds and grieving in their sorrows, be ready also to relieve any, especially Christs disciples when they are in distresse & want according to your capacity & as you have opportunity. Employ all your Talents for your Masters glory, and endeavour to promote the interest of the Lord Jesus unto the utmost of your abilities. 1. In reference to those which are without. If you are called your selves, labour to call others unto Christ, as *Andrew* called *Peter*, *Philip* called *Nathaniel* unto the *Messias*, *John* 1. 40 41, 44, 45. If you have found the *Messias*, or rather have

have been found of him, let your love to Christ, and love to souls prompt you, to endeavour the Conversion of others that are your Relations, your Friends and Acquaintances. Put your unconverted Friends in mind of their miserable Estates whilst under the guilt & reigning power of sin, whilest slaves to the Devil and their own lusts; mind them of Death and the fearful consequences thereof to all unpardoned sinners; tell them of Christ that he is the only Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind. How able and willing he is to save them, if they seek after him and apply themselves unto him; tell them that not long since you were in the same estate with themselves, living in the practice of the same sins and going on in the same way to destruction; and that the Lord hath shewed mercy unto you in your conversion, & bringing you into a state of salvation: tell them that there is mercy also for them if they look after it, that Gods Grace is most free, his mercy most plentiful, that Christ is most gracious & casteth out none that come unto him: tell them of the amiableness of Christs Person, of the surpassing love which he hath shewn to fallen mankind in his dying for them; & that though he were dead yet he is alive & lives for evermore to intercede for all them that make choice of him, & make use of him for their Advocate. Therefore perswade them that they would break off their sins by repentance, which otherwise will be the ruine both of their bodies & of their souls in hell & without delay that they would come unto Christ & accept of him upon Gospel-terms. If any of you cannot manage these arguments well your selv's perswade them, if you can, to hear such Ministers & Sermons as through Gods blessing have been effectual for your Conversion, and thus you may be instrumental to augment the Kingdom of Christ, which is one of

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the best ways of expressing your love unto Christ. 2. In reference to them which are within; labour to promote the interest of Christ amongst them that are truly Gracious, by vigorous endeavors to strengthen and establish them, to quicken and encourage them in the wayes of the Lord: Communicate the experiences which you have had, as you see there is real need, and it may tend not so much to your praise as your Masters honour. Labour in your places to be both shining and burning lights: be forward to every good word and work. Look upon your selves as the devoted Servants of Christ, and that you are not your own, and therefore lay out your selves to the utmost for him, and give all diligence to glorifie him with your bodies & spirits, with your Estates and interests, with your gifts and talents, all which are his, and ought to be at his devotion.

3. Shew your love to Christ in your vigorous resistance and opposition of Christs enemies. There are three grand Enemies of Christ which you are by your Baptisme engaged to fight against, namely the Devil, the Flesh, and the World which war both against Christ, and against your Souls. This Trinity of Adversaries agree in one, and combine together against his anointed, doing their utmost endeavour to break his bands, to untye his cords, and to unhinge his Government; they would pluck the Crown off of Christs head could they reach it, and the Scepter out of his hand, they would devest Christ if they could of all his power here on Earth, and confine him to his territories in Heaven; but all their attempts in this kind have been and will be in vain. Christ hath tryed the strength of these Enemies and hath vanquished them, but still some life & power is left with them to war against the holy seed, you are Christs Souldiers, listed under his banner, shew your fi-

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delity and your love to your Captain and General, in manfully maintaining the spiritual combat against his & your spiritual Enemies: fight the good fight of Faith, resist unto blood, don't yeild upon any account; disdainfully turn away the Eye and Ear when these Enemies would entice and allure you, and stoutly make resolute opposition against them, when they do most furiously assault you: hearken to no suggestions of the Devil, temptations of the world or motions of the Flesh which would induce and draw you into ways of sin, or which would force and drive you out of the wayes of Christ; resist and oppose, and labour to gain some victories over these adversaries every day, especially get conquest over the Flesh, and the other two will be soon vanquished; Christ shewed his love to you in submitting himself to be crucified for you, do you shew your love to Christ in crucifying your Flesh with its affections and lusts for his sake, in your self-denial and mortifying the deads of the body, when you deny your Carnal Reason your carnal Wisedome, your carnal will, your carnal Affections, your carnal interest, all inordinacies of your sensual appetite for the sake of Christ; when you crush pride, envy, revenge, malice, inordinate anger, inordinate love, inordinate desire, inordinate grief, lustfullness and all evil concupiscence for the sake and because of the command of Christ, all these are acts and evidences of love to Christ, and herein you should exercise your selves daily.

4. Shew your love to Christ in your following of his example, discover your affection unto him in your imitation of him, in writing after his copy, in treading in his steps, in walking as Christ himself walked, when he was here upon the earth, shew your love to Christ by labouring after likeness unto Christ, that you may be like him

him both in your inward disposition, and in your outward conversation: Christ was lowly, be you humble and mean in your own esteem: Christ was meek, be you gentle, easie to be intreated, and not easily provoked: Christ loved God, let God be the object of your love: Christ hated sin, let sin also be the object of your hatred: Christ contemned the world, do you get crucified affections unto it. Christ was compassionate to those that were in distresse, do you labour for the like bowels. Christ used to Worship publickly in the Synagogues, to pray with his Disciples, and to spend time also in secret prayer, do you give your attendance in the publick assemblies of Gods people, worship God in your Families, and be often upon your knees at the Throne of Grace in secret. Christs mind was a heavenly mind, let the same mind be in you as was in Christ. Christs will was submissive to his Fathers will, let the same will be in you as was in Christ. Christs words were gracious and edifiing, let your speech be always with Grace, savoury and which may be for edification. Christs life was an active life, he was always doing good, and he was exactly holy in all his actions, be you active and diligent in the service of God in doing good to others, and be holy as Christ was holy in all manner of conversation, thus should you shew your love to Christ in following Christs example, and in imitating of him in every thing wherein you are capable of such imitation.

5. Shew your love to Christ in your readiness to take up and patiently bear Christs cross: I don't say you should desire sufferings for Christ, but sure I am that strong love to Christ will not permit you to decline them; don't go out of Gods way for them, neither go out of Gods way from them, if you meet with the cross in the way of duty, don't either turn back, or start aside

but chearfully take it up, and when you have got it up patiently bear it, and don't throw it off, till God take it off; when it is your duty to suffer for Christ, look upon it also to be your priviledge and be glad of the opportunity, rejoycing that you have any thing to part withal for the sake of Christ, if it be good name, or good estate or good Friends, if it be liberty or life it self; such expressions of love are very honourable and very pleasing to your Lord and Master.

6. And lastly, Shew your love to Christ in your desires after Christs presence here, and in your longing for his second appearance at the last day. 1. Desire Christs gracious presence here, and the manifestations thereof, that according to his promises he would come unto you, that he would draw near, and that you might feel that he is near; desire that you might have clearer discoveries of Christ, and more intimate communion & fellowship with Christ; above all company & fellowship desire the company fellowship and acquaintance with Christ, that you might walk with him and converse with him, and that there might be a dayly intercourse between Christ and your souls, and that all distances between you, and strangeness might be removed let your love express it self in desires after Christ when he is absent, and in delights when he is present; rejoice in the Lord exceedingly when he doth manifest himself unto you graciously, admire his beauty and delight in his smiles, admire his love & delight in the perswasions of his favour, let the actings of your love, and the workings of it, be such to your beloved dayly. 2. Desire also and long for the second appearance of Christ at the last day; when he saith, *Surely I come quickly*, do you say, *Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus.* Look upon time as slow of heel and wing, that it runs no faster, that it flies no swifter,

swifter: look to the End of Time, and long for it, because then with these eyes you shall see him whom your Soul loveth, because then you shall see Christ come down from the Throne of God with such brightness of Majesty, and Brightness of Beauty, as will transport you with Wonder and Joy. Say, *When Lord Jesus wilt thou take to thy self thy great Power, and cloath thy self with thy Authority, and come down to judge the World? when wilt thou open the everlasting gates of Heaven which have been shut so long? When wilt thou descend from Heaven with a shout, with the sound of the great Trumpet, and send thine Angels to gather all thine Elect from the four Winds, that all who love thee may meet in one Society? when shall we put on our Garments of Immortality, and be caught up in the Clouds to meet thee in the day of thy Triumph? When shall the day of our Coronation come, and of our admission into the Glorious Mansions which thou hast prepared for us in the Glorious Pallace which is above? When wilt thou shew us thy self, and give us to behold thee face to face? When wilt thou shew us the Father, and give us to behold him immediately without a Glass? When wilt thou shew us thy Glory which thou hadst with the Father before the World was, and give us not onely to see it, but also to share in it? When wilt thou open the Treasures of thy Love, and receive us into the neerest, closest, and sweetest embracements thereof, and give us to drink of those Rivers of Pleasures which are with thee? O hasten Lord hasten thy glorious appearance, that thou mayest be glorified before the whole World, and we be glorified with thee, that we may be then taken to live with thee, and reign with thee, and be made perfectly happy in the full and everlasting enjoyment of thee.*

Thus I have done with these Directions, the last thing in this Use of Exhortation.

And what do you now say after all Motives to excite an

and perswade you to the Love of Christ, and Directions therein? shall all be in vain?

What do you say, Sinners? shall Christ have your hearts or no? will you harbour base lusts in your hearts that will damn you and keep out the Lord Jesus Christ who alone can save you? shall I gain no hearts for Christ by all my Sermons which I have preached concerning the Love of Christ? My Lord and Master hath sent me to woe you, to win your hearts for him; may I speed or no? shall my Message be accepted, and Jesus Christ the most lovely person find entertainment with you? If any person or thing in the world which you do most dearly love, do so well deserve your love, lock your ears still against all my words, and let them perish like an empty sound in the Air; lock your hearts against Christ, who stands knocking at the door, and give an absolute and peremptory refusal to give him any room there; But if in the whole world you cannot find out a suitable beloved besides Christ, if there be nothing here below but is unworthy of your hearts, if all inferiour things whilest they have your chief Love do debase you and defile you, and unless your hearts be taken off from them, will certainly ruine and destroy you everlastingly; O then be perswaded without any further delay to open the everlasting doors of your hearts, to let Christ into them, and set Christ up in the highest seat of your Affections; O be perswaded to give Christ your chief Love, to give him your Heart, and your whole heart; with grief and hatred let go your hold of sin, and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ in the Arms of your dearest Love. And then I would say to you as our Saviour did to *Zacheus* when he gave him entertainment in his house, *This*

*day is Salvation come unto you.* O happy day unto you! O happy you that ever you were born, if this day Christ should be heartily entertained by you! This then would be the day of your Conversion, in which the Angels would rejoyce; and though Grief and Trouble might invade you for a while because of your sin, yet this would make way for your spiritual Joy; weeping might endure for a Night, but joy would come in the Morning: but O the joy which you will then have in the day of your Coronation, when all tears shall be wiped away from your Eyes, and when you shall have admittion into the glorious presence of the Lord, where there is Fulness of joy and pleasures for Evermore.

And what do you say, Believers? you that have some Love to Christ, shall this Doctrine, and these Sermons which I have preached, be a means to raise & heighten your Love? Your Love hath been too much mixed, will you love Christ more purely? your love hath been very weak, will you love Christ more strongly? Your Love to Christ hath been but a spark, shall it now break forth into a flame? after such blowings shall there be no burnings? When you think of Christ's Person so amiable, his Love so incomparable, his Benefits so inestimable, shall not this fire your hearts? and will you not now love him more dearly and ardently than ever? will you be perswaded to get off your hearts from Earth and Earthly things, and get up your hearts to your Lord which is in Heaven, and there settle your Love there upon him, so as never to withdraw it from him any more? Will you love the Lord Jesus much, whom you can never love too much? will you now dwell in the Love of Christ, and be more

more frequent and fervent in the actings of it? Then O what comfort would you find in your Love! and what sweetness in the sense of Christs Love! This would be the surest Evidence that Christ loveth you, because Christ loveth first; and how would this sweeten your passage through the Valley of Affliction, and through the Valley of Death. This would sweeten a bitter cup, and make a sweet cup more sweet. In Life the sense of Christs Love will be better than life; but at Death this will be the onely stay and support which you can have, nothing else can give any well-grounded comfort in a dying hour. Death rageth and playeth the Tyrant every where, shooteth his Arrowes hither and thither, sometimes he smiteth those that are Elder than your selves, and sometimes those that are younger: sometimes those that are weaker than your selves; sometimes those that are stronger; sometimes those that are better, sometimes those that are worse; sometimes the righteous are smitten, sometimes the wicked; sometimes the profane, and sometimes the Professors; that all might be awakened to prepare. And what is it that can give you comfort when you come to the sides of the pit? You may have the Love of your dear Yoke-fellowes, weeping and mourning at your Bed-side, Children, Kindred and Friends wringing their hands, and looking with a pitifull countenance upon you, grieving to part with you, but what comfort can all their Love yield unto your departing Spirits? their Love may disturb you, and make you the more unwilling to dye and leave them because they are so unwilling to part with you. But the Love of Christ and sense thereof, will be a Comfort indeed, because he is a Friend whom you are not departing from,

but going unto, and O the delight which then you may have, when Friends look most sad, & Death looks most grim, when the trembling Joynts, the clammy Sweats, the intermitting Pulse, the falling Jawes, the ratling Throat, and other symptomes give notice of near approaching death! then to think, *I am now come not onely to the Door of Eternity, but also to the Gate of my Fathers House, where many Saints are gone before me, and many Angels are attending for me, and where my dearly beloved Jesus is, and hath prepared for my Reception and eternal Habitation: Here are Friends about my Bed-side, who ere long will convey this Body to the Grave, to be fed upon by Worms, but here are Angels also by my bed-side waiting for my Soul, that so soon as it is loosned from this dying Carkase, they may convey me to the heavenly Paradise: Within a few minutes now, and I shall be with my dearest Lord, where my Faith will be swallowed up in Vision, my Hope in Fruition, and my Love will come to Perfection. O the Glorious Light which there and then will shine into every corner of my mind! O the Love and Joy and ineffable Delight, when I come to see and enjoy and live for ever with my most dearly Beloved!* This, This onely will make you willing to dye, and this sense of Christs Love will effectually sweeten your passage through the dark Entry of Death.

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# APPENDIX,

Concerning

Chriſts Manifeſtation of Himſelf, unto them that love him.

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Joh. XIV. latter part of *verſ.* 21.

— *And he that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him.*

WE read, *Luk.* 4. 22. *And all bare him witneſs, and wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* Never did ſuch gracious and ſweet words drop from the lips of any man that ever lived, as thoſe, from the lips of Chriſt when he was here upon the Earth: and of all Chriſts words, thoſe which he ſpake to his Diſciples in his laſt Sermon, before his laſt ſuffering, in the 14, 15, and 16. Chapters of *John*, are ſuperlatively ſweet, and none more ſweet in this Sermon than the words of my Text read unto you, *And he that loveth me ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him.* In the former part of the verſe we have the Character of one that doth truely love Chriſt: *He that hath my Commandements and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* In the latter part of the verſe which is my Text, we have the Priviledge of one that doth truly love Chriſt, and that is in three Promiſes which Chriſt doth make

unto him: 1. *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father.* 2. *And I will love him.* 3. *And will manifest my self unto him.* It is the last of these Promises which I shall speak unto by way of *Appendix* unto my Treatise of the Love which true Christians have and ought to have unto Christ, and that is the Promise of Christs manifesting himself unto such as love him. And the Doctrine is this.

Doct. *That Christ will manifest himself unto such as love him*

In handling of this point I shall shew, 1. What it is for Christ to manifest himself. 2. That Christ will manifest himself to them that love him. 3. How Christ doth manifest himself unto such. 4 When Christ doth manifest himself unto such. 5 Where Christ doth manifest himself unto such as love him. 6. And lastly, make some Application.

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## SECTION I.

1. WHat it is for Christ to manifest himself?

1. Christ doth manifest himself when he maketh a clearer discoverie unto His Disciples of the excellency of His Person, when he doth further unveil himself, and lets forth some beams and rays, with greater lustre and brightness to discover more of the oriency and transcendency of his soul-ravishing beauty unto them, which they had but a dimmer sight and darker apprehensions of before; and this is done when Christ doth more fully impart of the spirit of wisdom and revelation unto them. Upon this account the Apostle did pray in the behalf of the believing *Ephesians*, that the Lord would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation to enlighten their under-

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standings in the knowledge of him, *Eph.* 1. 16, 17 18. they had the spirit before and some knowledge of Christ before, but he prayes that God would give them fuller measures of the spirit, to make a clearer discovery of Christ, that the eyes of their understandings might be more and more enlightened unto a more spiritual discerning of the surpassing Beauty and Excellency in Christs person, in the knowledge of whom the most enlightned Christians are capable of further growth unto the end of their life, hence that Exhortation of the Apostle *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. *But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

2. Christ doth manifest himself, when he maketh a deep impression, and giveth a sweet sense to his Disciples of his presence; Christ is never really absent from such as Love him, but he may seem to be so sometimes, they may apprehend him to be a far off he may and often doth withdraw the sense of his presence, *Cant.* 5. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone.* Christ doth manifest himself, when he doth draw near to his people, and maketh them feel that he is near, giving them a sweet sense of his presence through the powerful breathings of his Spirit upon them, whereby their hearts are quickned and enlarged, and drawn forth towards himself, and their graces excited unto powerful exercise.

3. And chiefly Christ doth Manifest Himself, when he makes discovery of His Love unto them that love him; when He gives them to see not only the beauty of His face, but also the smiles of His face, when He gives them to behold the amiableness of His countenance, and withall lifts up upon them the light of His countenance, when he sheddeth abroad the

ſenſe of His Love into their hearts, giving them a full perſwation of his ſpecial love unto them, and alſo a ſweet ſenſe thereof. Thus Chriſt doth ſometime look kindly, and ſpeak kindly unto his people, and this ſweet language is not ſpoken to the ear of the body, but inwardly by his Spirit to their ſouls, when he ſaith to the ſoul, *I am thy ſalvation and thy Saviour, I have loved thee with an everlaſting Love, and my Love is unchangeable; The Mountains ſhall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving kindneſs ſhall never depart, and be removed from thee: I have given my ſelf for thee, and I have given my ſelf unto thee, and I will never repent of this gift; I have choſen thee for my ſelf, called and joyned thee unto my ſelf, and I will never repent of this choice, nor ſuffer thee to be disjoyned from me for ever: I have thee upon my heart, and keep thee in my hand, and no powers of Earth or Hell ſhall be able to pluck thee thence; I have given thee my grace, and I will ſhew thee my glory, and ere long I will appear in the world & receive thee to my ſelf, that where I am there thou may'ſt be alſo. Dry up then thy tears, clear up thy countenance, baniſh thy fears, droop no longer, diſpend no more, but be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee, thy name is written in my book which none can blot out, Thou haſt a true Love for me, and my Father himſelf loveth thee and I love thee with a moſt endeared Love, and therefore do not queſtion or doubt of my Love any more.* Thus Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf and his Love ſometimes unto drooping diſponding ſouls.

## SECTION II.

2. THat Chriſt will manifeſt himſelf unto them that love him, appears, in that His Love doth engage him, and His word doth engage Him hereunto.

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His Love doth engage Him, the Love of Christ is like fire, that cannot conceal it self long, and no fire so strong, and hath such a vehement flame as the Love of Christ to His people. *Joseph* had a great love to his Brethren notwithstanding all their unkindness, and although he concealed himself for a while, and spake roughly unto them, yet after they were sensible of their fault, and were filled with perplexing fears, he could conceal himself no longer from them, as in *Gen.* 45. 1. *Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all that stood by him, he wept aloud, and said unto his brethren, I am Joseph*, and ver. 4. *Joseph said unto his brethren, come near me, I am Joseph your Brother whom ye sold into Egypt.* So Christ may conceal himself for a while from his people, whatever love he hath to them, and whatever they have to him; some unkindnesses they have shewn may be the cause of this hiding, but when they are sensible of their fault, full of grief and perplexity for their offences, his Love will not permit him to hid himself much longer; His Love will engage him to manifest and discover himself, and say, I am Jesus your Saviour, come near me my brethren, come near me, that you may have a clearer view of me, that ye may know me and know that I do love you. The Word also of Christ doth engage him, manifest Himself unto them that Love Him: It is Christs promise here in the Text, *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him.* Christs word is sure, True and faithfull is Christs name; the ordinances of the Heaven may sooner fail, than Christ fail of His Word and Promise.

## SECTION III.

3. HOw Christ doth manifest Himself unto them that love him.

1. Christ doth here in this world manifest himself but in part and darkly. The soul is not now capable of the fullest and cleerest Manifestation of Christ, This is a happiness reserved for the other world. 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. *Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*, *Joh.* 17. 24. *Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.* It is hereafter that Christs Disciples shall be perfectly like unto Christ, and shall have a perfect manifestation of Christ, that they shall see him as he is: It is Hereafter that they shall behold his glory; The lustre and brightness of Christs glory is so great that should he now let forth the beams thereof upon them, it would dazle and amaze them, it would strike them blinde, yea it would strike them dead; there is need, because of their weakness, that Christ should keep a veil on his face, when he makes discovery of himself, they cannot now bear the full patefaction and manifestation of Christ: therefore Christ doth discover himself but in part. As the Queen of *Sheba* saith concerning *Solomons* wisdom and prosperity, 1 *King* 10. 6 7. *It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts, and thy wisdom: howbeit I believed not the words, until I came and mine eyes had seen it: and behold the one half was not told me, thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame thereof.* It is not the one half which Christs Disciples do now hear or can discern of their masters excel-

excellencies. It hath not now entred into their hearts to conceive what Beauties and Glories and most admirable perfections there are hid in their beloved; not only Christs Love but also Christs loveliness doth pass their knowledge: there are such dimensions of most wonderful Glory in Christs person, as do infinitely transcend the capacity of the most elevated minds; fully to comprehend. Christ doth manifest himself truly to them that love him, yet it is but partly, and that but a little part, it is but darkly by the beams of a more obscure light, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10 11, 12. *For we know in part, and propheſie in part: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away: When I was a child I ſpake as a child, I underſtood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man I put away childiſh things: For now we ſee thorow a glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face: Now I know in part then I ſhall know as I am known* We Miniſters Propheſie but in part, we can tell you but a little of what there really is in Christ, and both we and you know but in part: our conceptions of Christs excellencies and our expreſsions now are childiſh, hereafter there will be a perfect manifeſtation of Christ, and then all imperfections of knowledge will be removed. Now you may ſee Christ, but it is through a glaſs darkly; hereafter face to face: Indeed it is ſaid, 2 *Cor.* 3, 18. *We all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the Glory of the Lord are changed, &c.* There is a comparative open diſcovery of Christ now in Goſpel times, over what there was under the Law; the veil of Types and Figures, which covered and in a great meaſure hid Christ from the view, is now removed, our face is now open from that veil, but Christs face is not fully open, there is glaſs ſtill be-

between our eye and Christs face (the glass of Ordinances which though it doth help us to see him, yet it keeps us from the cleerest discovery of him) we see but thorow a glass darkly; our eyes now need this glass to help our weakness, and that we may see what we do see: there is a time coming when we shall be above the need and use of the Ordinance-glasses, I mean when we shall see Christ face to face, and know him in heaven as we are known by him.

2. Christ doth now manifest himself gradually unto them that love him, Christ doth not shew at once and altogether what he means to discover of himself and of his Love, but he doth it by degrees, a little at one time, and a little at another time, a little in this Ordinance, & a little in that; now he lets down some comfortable beams of the light of his countenance into the soul, by and by clouds do arise and obscure this light, and darkness is upon the spirit: Sometimes Christ opens the curtain and looks upon the soul, gives gracious smiles, by and by curtain is drawn, and his face is hid; now he appears, and then he disappears; he manifesteth himself at one time, withdraws himself at another time, and so leads his people on from one discovery of himself unto another, until he bringeth them at last unto the full discovery of himself in Glory.

3. Christ doth manifest himself most sweetly unto them that Love him especially after long absence. When the soul hath been seeking and cannot finde him, wandring in the wilderness under amazing fears, perplexing doubts, doleful despondencies, sinking and heart-overwhelming grief; after a black night of deep desertion, Oh how sweet is the day-spring from on high! Oh how comfortable are the bright beams of the morning light! when he shineth upon their dark and despised and sorrowful

rowful spirits, giving them to know assuredly that they are the dearly beloved of his Soul, that he hath not forgotten them, that he will not forsake them, that he hath a more tender Love unto them than the mother to her sucking child! Oh the raviſhments of spirit! Oh the transports of soul which do arise from hence! O the songs which are then in their mouths. This is our beloved, we have waited for him! this is our dear Redeemer we have trusted in him! Tongue cannot expresse the delight, the joy and gladness of heart, which doth arise from the manifestation of Christs presence and love; the joy of harvest, the joy of the Bridegroom on the wedding day, the joy of victory and taking great spoils, spoils from an Enemy, the joy of a poor man in finding great treasures, and the greatest delight which ever was found in the sweetest sensual enjoyment is not worthy to be compared with the joys and exaltings of heart, in the manifestation of Christ unto the Soul.

## SECTION IV.

4. WHen doth Christ manifest himself unto them that love him?

1. Sometime Christ doth quickly manifest himself, after a little seeking; some young converts have early and soon discoveries of Christ and his love; they are cast down for a little while, and Christ soon comes unto them and lifts them up again: weeping endures but for a night, and that a short summer night, and joy cometh early in the morning: they have the spirit of bondage who awakeneth them to fear, by and by the Spirit of Adoption doth graciously visit them, and make discovery

covery of their relation to the Father, the love of their Saviour, and sheddeth abroad the sense of his love into their hearts.

2. Sometimes Christ is long before he manifest himself: it is long before some do seek Christ, and it is long before such do find him: Christ waites long to be gracious unto them, and Christ doth often make them wait long before he manifesteth to them his loving kindnesses yea sometimes early seekers are not early finders; Christ makes some wait a long time to try their faith and patience, their love and obedience, and that he may prepare them for more than ordinary comforts and sweetnes which he intendeth to give in the discovery of himself unto them.

3. Sometimes Christ doth suddenly manifest himself unto them that love him, *Cant.* 6 12. *Or ever I was aware my Soul made me like the Charets of* Aminadab, or ever they are aware they see the Chariots of *Israel* and the horsemen thereof, and the Lord Jesus doth come unto them in the Chariots of Salvation with such Glory and Lustre as doth transport and amaze them. Some Christians that truely love Christ, have sought him in this Ordinance, and have not found him, and they have sought Christ in that Ordinance, and have not found him: they have been looking and waiting and hoping that at this time Christ would discover himself, or at that time he would discover himself, and still he hath hid himself, still they have come off with disappointment; this hath been their Grief, this they have complained of before God, and they have been under fears lest they should never see him, never meet with him at all; hereupon their Spirits have been ready to fail and sink within them, and in discouragement they have been ready to say or think that all their labour would

would be in vain; and yet they have resolved to seek him to their death, and though he should kill them, to put their trust in him: And behold on a sudden, when they have had the least expectation, and their hope hath been ready to give up the Ghost, they have met with Christ, and found him whom their Soul loveth: on a sudden the Veil of the Temple hath been rent, and they have seen their beloved in the Holy of Holies; on a sudden the clouds have fled, their darkness hath passed away, and the light hath shined: the North-wind of trouble hath ceased, and the sweet Southern Gales have blown upon them; I mean they have been under such shinings and breathings of the Spirit, that they have seen and felt the presence of Christ; and such a sweet sense of his Love, as hath filled them with Soul-ravishing joy.

4. Christ doth manifest himself seasonably unto them that Love him. Though he doth not alwayes manifest himself when they most desire, yet he doth manifest himself when they have most need, and then they have most need when they are most low, when they are most low in their Spirits, most poor and mean in their own esteem, as well as most low in their condition through Affliction and Trouble; Humility and Patience under Affliction, doth make way for the Experience of Christs manifestation; Christ doth many times reserve his cordials for the fainting fits, and the sweetest Consolations in the discoveries of his Love for the time of the greatest Adversity: especially, when the trouble is for his sake, he is graciously present: *John* had his Visions when he was banished for the sake of Christ unto the Isle *Patmos*. And when all men forsook *Paul* at his answer before *Nero*, then the Lord came to him, stood by him and strengthned him.

SECT.

## SECTION V.

5. WHere doth Christ manifest himself unto them that love him? This is in the way of his ordinances, there he doth walk there he doth appear unto his people; sometimes Christ doth manifest himself in the way of private ordinances, when they seek him in their Families, or in their Closets, when they speak of him in conference, or when they think of him in their Meditation & Contemplation: sometimes Christ doth manifest himself unto them that love him in the way of Publick ordinances, in Publick Prayer or Fasting, in hearing of the Word, or when they are feasting at his Table, especially in this fast mentioned ordinance Christ doth frequently manifest himself unto his Disciples most sweetly: At the Lords Table, the Lord doth appear; in breaking of Bread he discovers himself, as to the Disciples that went to *Immaus*; in his Banquetting-house he gives them to feast on his Love; There are many who can say by experience, that if ever they met with Christ in their Lives, and in any Ordinance, they have met with him at the Sacrament, there he hath unveiled his face, there he hath revealed his Love, there he hath breathed upon them by his Spirit, there they have found and felt the Lord to be near.

## SECTION VI.

I Come now to the Application: And here that I may to give to every one his Portion, I shall speak, 1. To you that have no love unto Christ: 2. To you that have some Love to Christ, but are without these Manifestations; 3. To you that both love Christ, and have Manifestations of his love unto you.

*Use* 1.

*Use* 1. The first Use doth concern such as have no love at all unto Christ: Christ will manifest himself unto them that love him, this is Childrens bread, and doth not belong to you, because you do not belong unto Christ: this is a choice and most rich Priviledge, but you have nothing to do with it: *Procul ite Profani.* Avant all ye profane ones, all ye unclean ones, all ye ungodly ones, all Unbelievers whatsoever, who being without Faith, are also without Love to Christ: see that you come not neer to lay your unclean hands upon this most excellent Promise; never look for any discovery of Christs love unto you whilest you go on in wayes of sin, whilest you are in your Natural Estate. I believe some of you may be ready to say, *What if Christ doth not manifest himself unto us? let us have our Honours and Dignity, let us have our Wealth and Plenty, let us have our Friends and Delights, and let who will look after those airy and fancifull Satisfactions in Christs Manifestations.* Sinners, is this your language either of tongue or heart? Let me tell you, one day you will sing another tune, you will be of another mind; one day you will acknowledge, that all the happiness which you so eagerly pursued in the sweetest creature-enjoyments, was but a Fancy, that it was thin, light and airy: that it was vain and empty; when all is fled away and left nothing behind but Stings and bitter Grief, but inward wounds, gripes, and dreads, upon the sight of approaching death, and under apprehensions of approaching Wrath, and eternal torments in Hell. Then what would you give for an Interest in Jesus Christ, & a well grounded Perswasion of his special Love unto your Souls? Then the manifestations of Christ will appear to be no airy thing, and that nothing besides this can rationally support your Souls when you come to the Borders of the Grave, and to the confines of Eternity. And let me further

ther tell you that have no love to Christ, that although Christ whilest you are such will never manifest himself unto you in a way of Love, yet there is a Day coming when he will manifest himself unto you, but this Manifestation will be with a Vengeance, it will be in a way of most furious anger; I mean, at the last day of Judgement when Christ will be revealed from Heaven, not onely to those that love him, but also to those that hate him, for every eye shall then see him, and he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance upon you that have not obeyed this Gospel-Precept, to love him. The Consideration of this should awaken you to fear and fly from sin, which otherwise will be your ruine and eternal perdition; and O that withall you would be perswaded to apply your selves unto the Lord Jesus Christ by Faith, that you may hereby have interest in him, and in that great Salvation which he hath purchased for you, & which in the Gospel is freely tendred unto you! and this Faith in Christ would work love to Christ, and put you in a capacity of these Manifestations of Christs love unto your souls.

## SECTION VII.

*Use* 2. THe second Use concerneth such of you as have some love unto Christ, but are without these Manifestations: and there are two sorts of such: 1. Some of you never had these Manifestations. 2. Some of you have had these manifestations, but have lost them.

1. Some of you never had these Manifestations of Christs Love It may be you are young & raw Christians, a little while ago you were forward Scholars in the school of the Devil, and served divers lusts with all your might & strength: the Lord hath lately hedg'd up your way

way with thorns, hath opened your eyes to see your sins and made you sensible of your danger, but as yet your eyes are not open as to any comfortable sight of your Saviour: Indeed Christ hath been revealed unto you as able and willing to save you, and you have been drawn by the Word and Spirit to take hold on him, and to give up your selves unto him; but as yet you are in the dark as to your Spiritual Estate; you are under doubts & fears of unsoundness and rottenness at heart, that you are Hypocrites, and shall fall away, as other Professors like your selves have done: you fear you shall one day perish by the hand of *Saul*, that the Devil and your own Lusts will be too hard for you, and prevail so far with you, as to pull you back into wayes of Sin, and thereby to pull you down into the bottomless Pit of Hell; This causeth a dread upon your spirits, and fearfull apprehensions of Gods wrath and future vengeance: this fetcheth many a sad and heavy sigh from your breasts, many a brinish tear from your eyes, you are troubled, bowed down greatly, and go murning all the day: Yet you are resolved to give your attendance still unto Ordinances, and there to wait upon the Lord, and for the Lord; you are resolved notwithstanding all discouragements, that you will be the Lords, though you know not whether he be yours; you are resolved that Christ shall have your hearts, and you will venture your souls upon him, though you know not whether you are accepted by him. This may be a Use of Encouragement unto you; certainly you are such as love Christ, and are beloved by Christ, and Christ will manifest himself unto such as have such Love; let me tell you, that Christ is not far from you, whatever you may apprehend, though he be out of your sight, yet you are not out of his, his eye is upon you, and his heart is towards you; he hears all your sighs,

he ſees all your tears. he pities you, and ſympathizeth with you in all your Griefs: he loves you, and ere long will let you know it: he is now preparing you for ſweet diſcoveries of himſelf, and ere long he will give you thoſe diſcoveries. If you follow on to ſeek him, he will certainly and may ſuddenly be found of you: And who knows but this may be the time of Chriſts manifeſting his Love? It may be whileſt you are Reading this Diſcourſe, you may have a glimpſe of his face, and hear his Voice ſaying unto you, *Be of good cheer, your ſins are forgiven you.* Lift up the hands that hang down, lift up the heart that is caſt down; Look up then dejected Soul, thy Saviour is before thee, open thine eyes and look, look with the Eye of Faith, canſt thou not ſee a marvellous Beauty in his countenance? doſt thou not perceive ſome ſmiles in his Face, ſome ſmiles upon thy Soul? Doſt thou not feel his Spirit ſweetly breathing upon thine heart, perſwading thee, and giving thee a ſweet ſenſe of Chriſts peculiar Love unto thee? Doſt thou not perceive ſome inward knockings at the door of thine heart, and hear ſome inward callings? *Open to me, and I will come in and ſup with thee.* This is the Voice of thy Beloved; make haſte and open to him, open all the Faculties of thy Soul, lift up the everlaſting Gates to this King of Glory; ſend forth the handmaids of thy Deſires to invite the Lord in, let thy Faith take hold on him and uſher him into thy ſoul and then embrace him in the Arms of thy deareſt Love, and give him ſuch entertainment that he may abide with thee for ever.

2. There are others of you have had ſome manifeſtations of Chriſt unto you formerly, but you have loſt them: your beloved hath withdrawn himſelf and is gone, you call and he giveth no anſwer, you ſeek him, but you cannot find him. Time hath been when your Lord

Lord was present, and gave you Gracious visits frequently, many a secret smile you have seen in his face, many a comfortable word you have had from his mouth, many a love-token you have received at his hand: Time hath been when you had your evidences written out fair and clean, with the Seal of the Spirit set unto them, and how exceedingly did you then rejoice in the sense of Christs love? how did you feast your selves upon his rich entertainment of Gospel priviledges which through him you were invested withal? And O the admirings which then you had of free Grace! O the sweet meltings of heart in the kindly sense of sin! O the enlargements of desire which you had in your Prayers! O the burnings of love to Christ which you have often felt in your bosomes! O the lively hopes which you had, and ineffable delight in hope of the Glory of God! But now there is a strange decay within you of Grace, and Alteration as if you were not the same Men and Women as you were before. You have withdrawn your selves from Christ, and he hath withdrawn himself from your Souls: you have let down your watch, and the Devil hath got advantage against you by his devices, he hath watched his opportunity and entangled you in the snares of some lusts; whilst you have heedlesly gone to the utmost confines of duty, and been upon the borders of sin, the Devil hath set forth a squadron of temptations not with fiery darts, but with silken cords, which have treated and parlyed with you to entice and perswade to go a little further, they have told you what pleasant fruit doth grow within those borders most sweet and delicious to the taste; that there are Silver and Golden Mines which you might quickly dig up, and find precious substances; that there you might have honour and esteem; and what would you turn your back upon all these? would you

be so nice and strict as not to dispense with a little duty as not to step over the hedge a little way, where the delights and advantage would be so great. And if you have hesitated, they have told you that it was very disputable, whether the confines of duty did not reach beyond the place which they would bring you unto, propounding the example of others of the same Religious Profession, that have frequently gone so far, & why should you scruple: or if it were a transgression it was but a little transgression, they would not desire you to go far, and who is there that lives & doth not transgresse those bounds? & you might easily repent and find mercy if God were offended: you might quickly retire & return into your former limits: then whilst you have been parlying with temptations, the silken cords have been fastned about you, & ere you have been aware you have been drawn along, partly willing and partly unwilling, & enticed unto some kind of sins, and complyed with some kind of lusts, indulging your selves to give them satisfaction, whereby you have been beguil'd, and betool'd, whereby you have been secretly wounded & inwardly defiled: & thus your evidences for Heaven have been miserably blotted, so that now you are not able to read them. Time hath been when worldly Affections seemed to be mortified within you, to be dead & buried, many a sore thrust and wound you had given unto them, and how did they bleed and faint, and grew so weak that they seemed to be giving up the Ghost, and you have thought surely they would never stir much in you any more: and then your love to Christ was strong & active, it did burn and flame within you, and O the zeal which you then had for your Masters honour, & you seemed to have no interest to carry on in the world but the interest of Christ, & you minded not your own things upon your own account, but all your interests were swallowed up

in the interest of Jesus Christ, which you chiefly minded and cared for, and made every thing else to truckle under it, and to be subservient unto it; but now your affections to Christ are strangely cooled; if there be the fire of love to Christ still within you, it is not fire in burning coals, or in a vehement flame, but it is a fire in a few scattered sparks, and those raked over that they give neither light nor heat, and are hardly, if at all, discernable by you, and your worldly Affections which seem'd to be dead, they have gotten Spirit and Life and Vigour, and Strength: O the eager desire which you have after the world; and the things in the world, and these accompanied with eager prosecution of the world now the world hath your thoughts in contrivements about it, and the world hath your tongues in your most frequent discourse of it, now the world hath your hand and your time, but that which is worst of all, the world hath your heart too, the world hath justled Christ off of his Throne & for the present doth usurp his seat. And is it then a wonder if your beloved be offended that you should thus decline in your love, that your hearts should go a whoring from him unto the Creature, in your giving those affections unto any thing in the world which are his due? Hence it is that Christ hath shut up his countenance from you, or if he looks, it is with frowns upon you; you have lost your first love, and you have lost your first sights, and your first tastes of the Love of Christ; now your spiritual joys and comforts are fled out of sight, they are lost and gone, and the bare remembrance of them only doth remain, and whatever delights you have they are only such as come in at the door of sense, you have none at all that come in at the door of faith, and your sensual delights have expelled and banished your spirituall; now the rich Gospel Priviledges have

not that favour and sweet relish with you as heretofore; your minding and savouring so much the Earth & Earthly things, hath distelished your spiritual appetite. O the mischief which indulged sin hath done unto you! O the unfelt wounds, but so much the more deep and dangerous, which sin hath given you! O the defilements of sin in your Consciences, and the stains and blots which sin hath cast upon your profession, O the havock which sin hath made amongst your graces, and amongst your comforts, Leaves you have still of an outward profession, but where is your fruit to be found? If you have some fruit, is it not withered fruit, sour and ill-relished, not such ripe and mellow and sweet fruit as heretofore in your flourishing estate? Surely the Lord is at a great distance from such of you, and are there not too many such amongst you? And what need have you to remember whence you are to fallen, to ransack your hearts to find out your sins, to humble your selves deeply, to repent and grieve and mourn, to turn your laughter into weeping, and your joy into heavinesse, and to return unto the Lord speedily and do your first works, otherwise some scarefull judgements are like to befall you and the Lord may be even forced to awaken you with avengeance, and make you a terrour unto your selves and unto all about you: Don't provoke the Lord, by your thus running away from him, to follow you with a storm as he did *Jonas*, and to devour you in the floods and waves of dreadfull afflictions, that hereby he may reduce and restore you, and keep you from being drowned in utter perdition and eternal destruction. It may be the Lord hath scourged some of you for your faults with the rods of some crosses & disappointments, some outward losses and troubles; it may be he hath put bitternesse upon those breasts which you have been

sucking, and mingling gall in the cup of your pleasures which you have been drinking; and you have begun to think of your evil wayes, and seen what an evil thing and bitter it is to backslide from the Lord; and you have thought it was best with you when you were neerest unto Christ. It may be God hath dealt with you as he telleth his backsliding people he would do with them, *Hos* 2 6, 7. *Behold I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths: And she shall follow after her Lovers, but she shall not overtake them, and she shall seek them, but she shall not finde them; Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now.* And now you are seeking after your Beloved, but he hath withdrawn himself from you, and seems to take no notice of you; you call and cry, & sigh and weep, and lament, and complain, and seek, and wait, and yet he withholds from you all special discoveries of his Love: Possibly doubts may hence arise, and fears grow upon your spirits, and you are ready to sink, and sometimes are almost overwhelmed with inward trouble. Let this Doctrine be an encouragement to you still to seek diligently and wait patiently, for the Lord will manifest himself again unto you in his own time which is the best time: He may try you for a while whether you will follow him in the dark, he may suffer you to wait some time for him, who have made him to wait so long time for you; But if you persevere to seek him diligently in his wayes, you shall finde that it will not be in vain. And what would you say, ye backsliding souls, if the Lord should manifest himself unto you at this time? would you not abuse his kindness if he should discover his Love to you again, would you not grow wanton and carnally secure? if he should now renew your evidences and give them fair written, and easie to

be read by you, would you not blot them again by your ſins? if he ſhould now ſpeak peace unto your Conſciences, would you not again return unto folly? If he ſhould now reſtore unto you the joyes of his ſalvation, and ſend down the Holy Ghoſt from Heaven to come unto you, to be your comforter and to dwell with you, would you not griev and quench the Spirit and provoke him to another retirement, and more dreadfull withdrawings than before? It may be the Lord will try you: it may be the Lord may draw near and make ſome diſcovery of himſelf, and diſcovery of his Love unto you: it may be the Lord may look kindly now upon you, and ſecretly by his Spirit ſpeak kindly unto you; you are now looking and longing and hoping, and waiting, poſſibly this may be the time of your ſeeing his face, and the ſmiles that are there, of your feeling the ſweet ſheddings abroad of his Love into your hearts by his Spirit, at leaſt he may give you a glimpſe, a glance, a little taſte, ſuch as ſhall raviſh your hearts. However wait for him, and with earneſt deſires and importunate requeſts, plead with him for his returns, and theſe manifeſtations, and that in ſuch kinde of Language as this: *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly, make haſte O my beloved, make haſte to my ſoul that thirſteth for thee, as the parched land after the ſweet ſhowers that fall from heaven, as the hunted Hard after the cooling and refreſhing ſtreams of the waters brooks. O when ſhall I drink of thoſe waters of Life which thou haſt to give, who art the fountain and ſpring from whence they flow? when ſhall I taſte again how good thou art? when ſhall I ſee thee again, and feed, and feaſt my ſoul again with thy love? when Lord, O when wilt thou come unto me? wilt thou caſt off for ever? wilt thou be favourable no more? haſt thou in anger ſhut up thy bowels? ſhall this cloud always ſit upon thy brow? ſhall this curtain always*

be

be drawn before thy face? Truth Lord, I have grievouſly ſinned, and greatly offended thee; but have I not, do I not truly repent? is there any thing in the world ſo grievous unto me as the remembrance of my miſcariages? I acknowledge my offence, my folly and horrid ingratitude; but ſhall my ſins be alwayes a wall of ſeparation between me and my beloved? are not thy bowels tender? are not thy mercies plentiful? is there not forgiveneſs with thee that thou mayeſt be feared and the more dearly beloved? doſt thou not forgive freely without upbraiding? haſt thou not promiſed to be found of all them that diligently ſeek thee? and didſt thou ever fail in thy word unto any? and ſhall I be the firſt? are not the deſires of my Soul after thee, and that chiefly, and that Earneſtly? Is there not dearth and drought in all things beneath thy ſelf, nothing that can give me ſatisfaction? have I not renounced the World for my Portion? Thou mighteſt ſend me to the World for help and comfort, to the World which I have over earneſtly deſired and loved, and over-eagerly ſought for contentment and happineſs in; But is this thy wont, and thy way, and the manner of thy dealing with them that are grieved for their Sin, and aſhamed of their Folly? Haſt thou not promiſed to manifeſt thy ſelf unto them that love thee? and do not I love thee? doſt not thou who knoweſt all things, know that I love thee? though my Love be imperfect, yet is it not true? though it be weak, yet is it not ſincere? elſe whence are theſe deſires after Thee above all Perſons and Things in the World? are not theſe the product of true Love? and wilt thou not make good thy Promiſe then, to manifeſt thy ſelf unto me? and if I had the Manifeſtations of thy Love, would not my love grow and encreaſe hereby? Should I not love the more dearly and ſtrongly, if I had clear diſcoveries, and were perſwaded aſſuredly of

thy

*thy love unto me? Truth Lord, I am altogether unworthy of such a favour; but didst thou ever bestow this favour upon any for their deserts? are not all thy Gifts free? and am not I as capable as any of Free grace? the more unworthy, the more I shall admire thee; the more is forgiven I shall love the more: And may I not now have a taste of thy loving kindness? Hasten my Beloved, O hasten unto me, and be as a Roe upon the Mountains of Spices! Do not veil thy face from me any longer, do not conceal thy love, but now, O now draw near, and make me exceeding glad in the light of thy Countenance, and in the beauty of thy Face, and smiles thereof.* Such desires and pleadings as these might prevail with the Lord forthwith to return again unto you, and to say, *Well Soul, I have heard thy Prayer, thy breathing, and thy cry: thy pleadings have prevailed with me, and I am now come unto thee, and be it to thee according to thy Desires; Come Soul, and look up, lift up thine eyes, and see, Here I am, Behold me, Behold me; this day I am come to bring glad tydings of great Joy unto thee. I assure thee, that I am thine, and all mine is thine, and thou art mine and shalt be mine for ever.* And what words can sound so sweet and yield such comfort, as these or such like, spoken by the Spirit unto the hearts of those from whom Christ is withdrawn?

## SECTION VIII.

*Use* 3. THe third Use doth concern you, that do love Christ, and have the Manifestations of his Love to your Souls: Three things be exhorted unto; 1. Rejoyce in the Lord. 2. Admire his Free Grace. 3. Labour to retain these Manifestations.

1. You that have the Manifestations of the Love of Christ, Rejoyce in the Lord: of all Persons in the world, you have most reason to rejoyce, you are the happiest men

men and wemen alive. It is not Wealth in the greatest abundance which can make men happy, the richest Persons have often thorns of the greatest discontent to pierce their hearts, and Stings of the greatest guilt to wound their Consciences; It is not the highest Honour and worldly Dignity which can make men happy; the vilest men are often exalted, and those that are in the Highest places, are in the most slippery places, from whence they are soon cast down into destruction, and whatever security they have in Life, yet they are usually consumed utterly with Terrours when grim Death doth appear and summon them to depart. It is not the sweetest sensual Delight which can make men happy: Vanity is the Attendant, and Vexation of Spirit is the Consequent of all those pleasures that are sensual & sinfull, which are the seed also of Pain and Everlasting torment: Such onely can be said to be happy in truth, as are really united and related unto Jesus Christ, and through him reconciled unto God, and entituled unto the Kingdom of Heaven; but you are the most happy, and have reason to take the most comfort, who have not onely Relation unto Christ, but also the Manifestations of him: who know that Christ is yours and you are his, that Christ loveth you, and that his Love as it had no beginning so it is without changing and will know no ending If you know that Christ loveth you you have reason to rejoyce, because hereby you may know assuredly that you are Elected, that God by an eternal and unchangeable Decree hath chosen you when he hath chosen so few of fallen Men, and none of the fallen Angels, and when there was not the least foreseen Motive to induce him hereunto; the assurance of this may yield unexpressible sweetness unto you. If you know that Christ loveth you, you may know assuredly your effectual Calling

ling, Converſion, and wonderfull Union unto Chriſt: and O what matter of Joy is it to think, how God hath called you out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light! how he hath delivered you out of the Snare of the Devil, and the bonds of your own Luſts, and ſet your Souls at liberty! how he hath wrought a Miracle in your firſt Reſurrection from the Grave, and ſpiritual death of Sin, and put forth the ſame power in your New Creation & change of your Natures, as in his firſt Creation of the World! how he hath diſſolved & made a divorce between your hearts and your ſins, and ſo wonderfully United and eſpouſed you unto the Lord Jeſus, and by this Conjunction and Relation given you an Intereſt in all the Priviledges which Chriſt hath purchaſed. If you know that Chriſt doth love you, you may know aſſuredly that you are juſtified through his Merits and Mediation, and O what matter of Joy is this, to think that all your ſins Original and Actual, are pardoned, that none can lay any ſin to your charge, becauſe God hath juſtified you! that there is none that ſhall condemn you, becauſe Chriſt hath loved you, and out of Love hath dyed for you, and is now making Interceſſion for you at the right hand of God, *Rom.*8 33,34 to be acquitted from all Guilt, and no more lyable unto future wrath than if you had never offended; and when you had no Righteouſneſs of your own, to be accepted as perfectly Righteous in the ſight of God, through the Imputation of Chriſts perfect Righteouſneſs! Who have reaſon to rejoyce, if you have not reaſon? If you know that Chriſt loveth you, you may aſſuredly ſay, that you are the Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty; and will you not rejoyce, when of Children of the Devil, Children of Diſobedience, Children of Wrath,

Wrath, you are made the Children of God, the Glorious Jehovah, that is the supream Sovereign and King of the whole World, and when you have not an empty Name onely, but are intituled to all the Priviledges of his Children? If you know that Christ doth love you, you may know assuredly that he will keep alive his Interest in you, preserve his Grace in your hearts, and enable you to persevere in Faith and Holiness, notwithstanding all the alluring Temptations which you may meet withall in the World, notwithstanding all the suggestions and oppositions of Sathan, and notwithstanding all the powerfull workings of your remaining lusts & corruptions, all which do combine together, and use all their power and policy (which is great) to extirpate your Grace, to draw you unto sin, to entice or force you out of the wayes of God: and O what matter of comfort is it, that the Lord Jesus who loveth you, hath undertaken for you, to keep you in his hand, and by his unseen but mighty power to enable you to resist & overcome, to hold on his wayes, and hold out unto the end, so that you may triumph with the Apostle, and say, as *Rom.* 8. 35, 37. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerours through him that loved us.* And you may be perswaded as *Paul* was, and greatly rejoyce therein, that, as *v.* 38, 39 *Neither death, nor life, nor Angels nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord.* If you know that Christ doth love you, you may know assuredly that your Prayers have audience with

with God, that whatever imperfections and ſinfull mixtures they have, yet that they are mingled with the ſweet Incenſe of Chriſts Merits, through which they are perfumed and accepted; and what comfort is this, that whatever you ask of the Father in the Name of your dear Lord Jeſus, if it be for his Glory and your good, he will certainly procure it for you. To conclude, If you know that Chriſt doth love you, you may know aſſuredly that you are Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, and that as certainly as you are alive, you ſhall attain eternal Felicity in the Beatifical Viſion and Fruition of your Lord; as certainly as you have the firſt Fruits, ſo certainly ſhall you have the Harveſt; as certainly as you have the Earneſt, ſo certainly ſhall you have the Inheritance; as certainly as you ſee Chriſt by Faith here, ſo certainly ſhall you have the Beatifical Viſion of his Perſon and Glory in Heaven, and be made perfectly happy in the eternal and full Enjoyment of him: O how ſhould you then rejoyce in the Lord, rejoyce in his Perſon, rejoyce in his Love, rejoyce in his Benefits, rejoyce in what you have, and rejoyce in what you hope to have by him, rejoyce in what you ſee now, and feel now, & taſte now; and rejoyce in the foreſights and foretaſtes of your Happineſs to come. *Rejoyce in the Lord alwayes, and again I ſay rejoyce.*

2. If you have Manifeſtations of Chriſts Love unto you, Admire his Free Grace in theſe Manifeſtations; as *Joh.* 14.22 when Chriſt had promiſed to manifeſt himſelf unto ſuch as love him, *Judas* (not *Iſcariot*, he was the Traytor, and had no true love to his Maſter, but *Judas* the Brother of *James*) ſaith to him, *Lord how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not unto the World?* This Queſtion is not a Queſtion of Enquiry concerning

cerning the Way and Manner how Christ would manifest himself unto them, but it is a Question of admiration concerning the Thing: Τί γέγονεν ὅτι ἡμῖν μέλλεις ἐμφανίζειν σεαυτὸν. What is done? or What is come to pass? How is it? or Whence is it? His Question did not expect an Answer, neither do we find any to it, but onely expressed his Wonder that Christ should manifest himself unto them. And how should you wonder then that the Lord Jesus should manifest himself unto you! That the Lord Jesus, whose Name is Wonderfull, and hath so many Wonders in him, a Person of so great Eminency and Excellency, who hath such a Crown of Glory upon his Head, such Robes of Glory upon his Back, and on the Vesture of his Garment and his Thigh a Name written, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*: that this most excellent Person should manifest himself unto You, such as You, when he conceals himself from the greatest Princes of the Earth, who by their Interest, Authority and Influence might that highly promote his Glory, he should manifest himself unto You, who for the most part are low and mean, poor and despised in the World; that when he hideth himself from most of the Wise and Prudent, and great Scholars in the world, who by their Parts and Learning might magnifie his Name, & spread his Fame, he should manifest himself unto you, who for the most part are persons of mean parts and Education; that when Christ hideth himself from many Moralists, who have escaped the grosser Pollutions which are in the World, he should reveal and manifest himself unto you, some of whom before Conversion were notoriously guilty of most foul sins; that when Christ manifesteth himself unto so Few, that you should be in the Number of those Few: how many wonders are here! That this Glorious Person should send down another

Glorious Person, I mean the Holy Ghost, from Heaven, (which is more than if he had sent down all the Glorious Angels which are in Heaven) to make this Discovery of himself unto you; That he should make use of the Foolishnesse of Preaching as a Means to effect this great thing, that while a man of like passions and infirmities with your selves is opening and applying the Scriptures, the Lord by this means should unveil himself and open the treasures of his Love unto you: that your humble fervent and believing prayers here on Earth should ascend up to the throne of God that is in Heaven, & move the Lord Jesus that is there to come down thence, though not in person, yet by his Spirit; that prayer should open heavens gate, and have such a prevalency for this manifestation and discovery of Christ; though the best prayers of the best men are not without mixture of sin: that whilst you are sitting at the Lords table, the Lord himself should give you a visit, and whilst you are eating bread and wine at the Sacrament, he should give you to see and feel and taste himself and his Love by your spiritual senses. It was wonderful humiliation in Christ that when he could have commanded the most stately Horses, yea Lions, Elephants, or Unicorns, he should ride to *Jerusalem* upon an Ass, and when Christ hath the Chariots of so many thousand glorious Angels, which he could command & ride triumphantly in, when he makes discovery of himself unto his people, that he should make use of the Chariots of so mean Ordinances in the discovery of himself unto you; how many wonders are here? how should you admire his wonderful Grace and Love, and say, *what is man that thou art thou mindful of him, or any of the sons of men, that thou shouldst thus visit them? what are we unworthy wretches? and why shouldst thou manifest thy self unto us? even so dear Jesus be-*

*cause*

*cause it seemed good in thy sight*: especially you have reason to wonder and admire at the manifestations which Christ hath given of himself and love to you, when you consider the excellency of these manifestations and discoveries, beyond all other discoveries. If you have seen the most rare works of Art and Human Invention, the most curious Pictures, the most stately Edifices, or any other works of the most ingenious contrivement: If you have viewed the works of nature which do far exceed those of Art, the beautiful frame of the Heavens over your heads, and the glorious Luminaries of Sun, Moon, and Stars, in their wonderful light and motion: the Earth under your feet when it hath got on its best attire, when the fields are clothed with grass in the Spring, or enriched with corn in the summer; If you have seen the most pleasant Brooks and Streams, and Fountains of water, the most stately Groves with lofty and broad shadowing Trees: the most flourishing Orchards, most richly laden with variety of the most delicious fruit: the most delightfull Gardens with variety of the choisest Flowers calling forth the most fragrant smell; If you have seen all sorts of Birds, and fowls in the Air, All sorts of Beasts on the Earth, All sorts of fish in the Sea; If you have seen the most goodly men that ever were born; the fairest women, with the most sparkling beauty: What is the sight of all these things, & the most lovely objects that ever were visible to the eye of the body? the sight of all is but mean and contemptible and not worthy to be named in comparison with the sight of the Lord Jesus by the eye of the Soul; Whatever beauty & loveliness there is to be found in any, or in all visible Creatures, there is infinitely more beauty and loveliness in Jesus Christ: all visible beauty is but a shadow, in Christ there is substantial beauty: all visible beauty is fading,

like the flower that soon withereth, like the leaf that soon fadeth, but in Christ there is permanent beauty; all visible beauty is inferiour and mean, yea deformity compared with Christs transcendent loveliness. There is no discovery to the eye of the mind comparable to the discovery of Christ unto the eye of Faith; the light of Nature in the greatest improvement of it, is but a weak & dim light in comparison with the spiritual light of the knowledge of Christ; no light so clear and bright, no light so pure & sweet, as that which makes discovery of the Lord Jesus unto the Soul. This discovery of Christ doth dispel clouds from the Mind, and exhale lusts from the Heart: it doth brighten the understanding & cleanse the Affections; it doth warm the Heart with love, and fill the Heart with comfort: it quiets the Conscience & purifies it; it gives a most sweet peace & tranquillity to the spirit, and withall brings in such spiritual joy, as is unspeakable and full of Glory. O how then should you admire the Riches of the Grace, and Kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ unto you! that he should give unto you this discovery of himself, when the discovery is so admirable, so excellent, so desirable, so useful, and which doth lift you up into a far higher degree of excellency, than the otherwise most accomplisht persons in the world, that are without this discovery.

3dly. To conclude, If you have these manifestations of Christ and his love unto you, labor to retain these manifestations. In a word, take heed of indulging your selves in any sins, which may provoke him to depart from you, and withdraw the sweet and comfortable influences of his Spirit, and be diligent in the use of all means and ordinances, publick, private & secret, whereby you may maintain daily Communion and Fellowship with him

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